

LIBERAL OPINIONS,

OR THE

HISTORY of BENIGNUS.

VOL. III.

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VOL. III.

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OR,
The HISTORY of BENIGNUS.
A NEW EDITION,
CORRECTED.
By Mr. P R A T T.



The Abode of Benignus discover'd.

V O L. III.

L O N D O N,

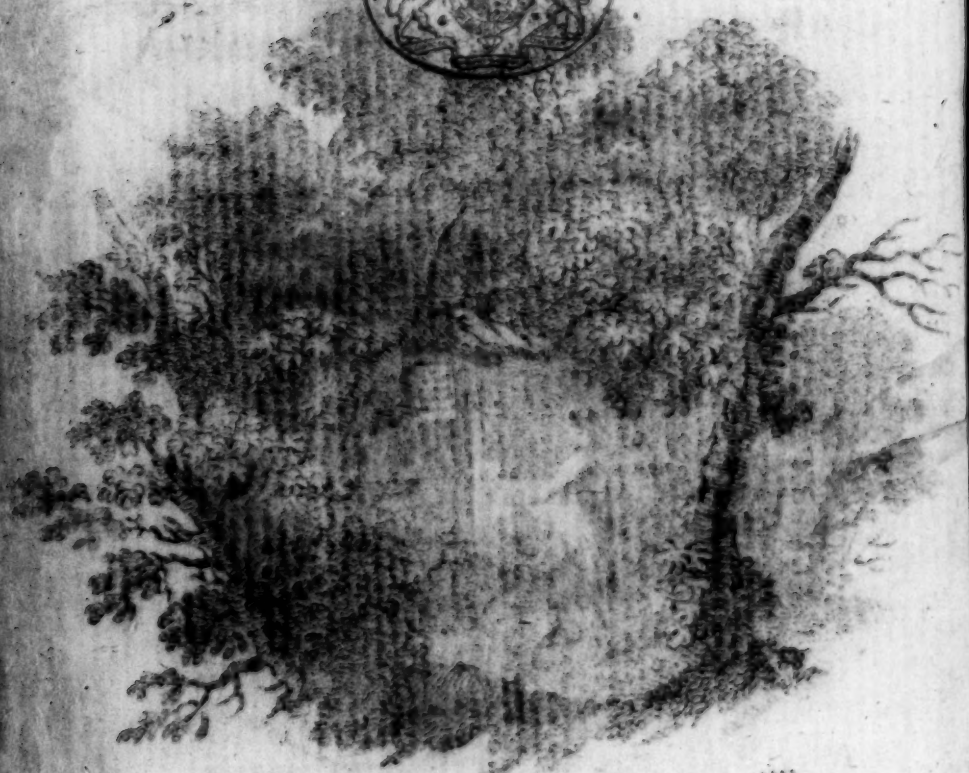
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A NEW EDITION,
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By M. M. M. T. T.



THE HISTORY OF BENIGNUS, continued.
VOL. II.

L O N D O N.
Printed for G. Robinson, and J. Bury, in Pall-mall.
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MDCCLXXIII.

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LIBERAL OPINIONS,



THE HISTORY OF BENIGNUS.

CHAP. LXVIII.

I THOUGHT Mr. Draper the true standard, and resolved to copy him; but, for the blood of me, I could not hit him off. The air of his walk was my first object; there was sometimes a trip, sometimes a swagger, and sometimes a kind of care-for-nothing faunter in his motions, which in him were be-

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coming,

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coming, but at second-hand were truly laughable: the trip had well nigh tilted me upon my nose; the swagger made me strike the arm of a lady, to the great injury of her ruffle, for which I had like to have been rewarded with a broken head, by a gentleman who, for aught I know, might be her husband; and, in trying to catch the faunter, I only succeeded in the care-for-nothing part of the business, which conducted me into a kennel. This unsuccessful mimicry gave such pleasure to the *most polished character of the age*, that he very plentifully wept with laughter, and, when I was making the effort to swing my cane with a suitable carelessness (by which I chuck'd it against the chin of a chairman, who damn'd me for a faucy rascal, and ran away with my property), it was too much to bear, and he supported himself against a door-post, from dropping

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dropping down dead in the street a victim to risibility. Piqued a little at this, I proposed phlebotomy, and offered to send for a surgeon; but Draper perceiving a crowd beginning to cluster (for it is incredible how few moments are necessary to collect a mob in London), he got the better of his convulsion, and asking my pardon, walked forward: I forgave him in expression, but the insult sunk deep into my heart, and whether benevolent or not, I wished for nothing half so much as an occasion of revenge: this, I think, was the second instance I detected in myself a propensity to recriminate. It will, however, be considered that I was now launched into the world; my village notions were wearing off; town maxims were succeeding; and I am much afraid we lose our amiable simplicity, in proportion as we engage in active scenes, and pro-

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cure that sort of knowledge which arises from such engagements.

At all events I was resolved to decline all imitations for the future, and stick to the original, uncouth as it might be. Better, thought I, to be naturally clownish, than affectedly ridiculous; and, perhaps, this *well-bred* town will soon give me as delicate a polish as the best of them. Draper, it is most likely, saw my chagrin, and rallied me upon it. Oh thou simpleton! cried he, in a world like this, to sacrifice a single moment to the spleen; but, above all things, to let an harmless piece of jocularitv make thee grave. To laugh, Mr. Draper, said I, you know is exquisite; but to be the subject of derision, is the agony of the damned. Pshaw, answered Draper, not amongst friends. He who furnishes the most amusement, is the most agreeable companion; and to shew you
that

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that I really think so, I charge you to have as much laugh out of me as you possibly can ; and before half the day is over, a precious morsel you'll find me, I promise you. Look, if Tom Spangle is not crossing the way—the finest lad in the universe, Benignus : you must know him ; I'll introduce you directly. With this Mr. Draper skipped over the street, caring six-pence neither for the soul or body of the poor devil whom he left to scamper after him : nice was my escape ; for in attempting to be at the opposite pavement as soon as he, I was hemmed, in the middle of the street, by a press of coaches on the one hand, and a dreadful length of drays on the other, while the clash of wheels, the thunder of oaths, and the smack of whips, resounded on all sides : at length, however, I got safe to Mr. Draper, to whom I did not think fit to complain of

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my terrors, and he instantly put my hand into the soft and white palm of Mr. Tom Spangle.

Never were the exteriors of two people more exactly contrasted than those of Draper and Spangle, the latter being the sleekest, slimmest, and most shivering little wretch that ever "shuddered at a breeze." The chin was as smooth as the lips of a lady, the limbs as unsubstantially delicate as those which belong to the greyhounds of Italy, and the tender gentleman was just stepping into a milliner's shop, to recruit himself with Hungary water. We stopped him at the door, and I shall give the reader, with all possible regard to truth, an abstract of the conversation which now passed between Mr. Draper and his friend. So, you would not come amongst us yesterday, says Spangle; lost much of your dearly beloved *laugh*, I can tell you that:
had

LIBERAL OPINIONS. 7

had some of the sweetest sport in nature ; rather fatiguing, indeed, but variety rendered it enchanting. Aye indeed, replied Draper, how did you go on ?— This is no place, child, answered Spangle, to enter into the agreeable particulars ; there is a coffee-room you see.— They went in, seated themselves without ceremony, placed me in the middle, and thus Mr. Spangle, without any respect to the company in the room, continued his narrative : *Now*, Draper, I must tell you, that it was a complete day of rattle and extasy, and if my nerves had not been monstrously in tune, must have absolutely expired of an excess of bliss : never spent so exquisite a day in my life, a *fast day* into the bargain !—Such a put of a parson ; but the organ made us amends ; we all went to the chapel, *you know who* always sits in the pew facing the pulpit. What a pretty pu-

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ritan ! Lord Dazzle drew her eyes from the prayer-book more than once. Love-book thought to attract her by his voice, and so read the Psalms louder than the clerk ; Sir Charles Crazy *focus'd* her through an opera - glass ; but, Jesus ! George, what are all the tricks of arts to the charms of nature !—*I* was only in—a mere undress—and made a conquest in half an hour. Really, cried Draper, with a very grave face ! True, on my veracity, answered Spangle : about the middle of the Litany I made an impression ; the Epistle and Gospel set her a trembling ; the second lesson (that, you know, comes next) was something from Peter or Paul (I forgot which) about marrying and burning ; and this, as I fixed my eyes upon her, threw her into a celestial confusion, as much as to say, That Spangle is a divine fellow !—at the end of the Communion,

munion, she cried out with great fervour, Lord have mercy upon me ! and before Orthodox had half done his ditty, which was all about the obligations to charity—you know what a Jew he is—the smelling-bottle was at her nose ; in five minutes afterwards, as I pursued my advantages, her face turned quite red ; and, to my eternal honour, I drove her fairly out of church. The congregation rose to stare, the girl held down her head, as if she had been doing penance in a white sheet, tottered through the aisle, as if she would sink upon one of the old stone tombs, and some of the people, methought, looked at me, as they would say, Yes, yes, Mr. Spangle—it's all over with her.—She's breeding, I suppose, for all her piety !

He paused, and hummed an air. And do you think, sir, said I to Spangle, there was any thing so superlative-

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ly pleasurable in sending a young woman from divine service, by dint of stare? Pleasurable! echoed Spangle; why, sir, she's *modest*. Does that make it more honourable in you, to look that modesty out of countenance?—Certainly, said he: to triumph over a girl who goes to church four times a week, who pretends to such a cursed deal of devotion, and has always a—a—a—besides, she's *uncomeatable*. How do you know that? says Draper. Why, answers Spangle, as soon as old Orthodox had mumbled over his sermon, and dismissed us with the “Peace of God,” I gave my party the slip, and drove to Strawby's. Not to be got, though I offered a thousand for her privy purse: the jade wanted to fob me off with the first taste of the mercer's wife, who is to meet colonel Sweeps this evening; the woman's handsome, and desirable, but Strawby
has

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has only been after her a fortnight---besides, she's really married, and I detest adultery: 'tis one of my crying sins, you must know, Draper. So then, you have no hopes of this religious lady (cries Mr. Draper, who maintained very serious features during this discourse). Why yes, replied Spangle, upon the whole, I think I have, for Strawby is to set all wheels to work. She is, it seems, an only child, so is curfedly close attended by her mother: luckily, the father is dead, and the girl looks divinely in mourning. Here I felt a tear upon my cheek, which was not, however, detected by either of my companions; and the amiable Mr. Spangle went on in this manner.

C H A P. LXIX.

Strawby, it seems, knows a girl who keeps a young fellow, who is very intimate

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mate in the family, and who is, besides, in the good graces of the old woman, the mother : now the scheme is, to get this girl, to get this man, to get this woman. As how, said Draper--- My blood ran cold through my veins, and my heart lay freezing at my breast. As how? replied Draper. Why, this kept man, you may be sure, rejoined Spangle, wants cash. I will meet him at Strawby's (who will invite him), as if by accident ; then I will take such a liking to him, as to be afterwards often in his company. After this we will go to the church, where Miss Dian Dick--- a---a---I was going to tell her name ; but as this gentleman (pointing to me) is a stranger, and as it is an affair of honour, he will excuse me : so as I was saying, I will pretend to be deeply smitten, and talk about laying fortune and person at her feet. This induces the fellow (by this time my fast, friend)

friend) to post away to the mother's house, which you know is at the bottom of St. James's-street.---Pish, curse my blundering head!---but her *name* is sacred. I shall then soon pay a visit in form—then come to your call—in as it happens—then to your how-do-you familiars—then alarm the girl into a passion---tattle about settlements---bring a *proper* attorney with parchments---scheme a short delay---indulge endearment---set out together for an airing---drive about till it is dusk, and so then to Strawby's---(here he snapped his fingers, in a kind of victorious flourish over his head)---I started up, and exclaimed, in a stern voice, And what then, fir?---Why then, fir, replied Spangle, coolly, we may possibly take our chocolate in bed the next morning, and the *night* afterwards she will be very much at your service. What, don't you intend

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intend to make her your wife then, fir?
said I. Make her my wife? replied the
beau, in a faint, frightened voice—Would
you have me run my neck into another
halter? Then you are already espoused!
To the finest woman in the three king-
doms, and as much above this dingy
Diana, as Cleopatra was to that old
crooked crump of a think in the bar---
uttering the comparison loud enough for
a woman unhappily deformed to hear
him, as she was pursuing her business.
Mr. Draper, said I, if you'll favour me
with direction to this taylor, I will go
and find him out; for in the company
of a man who flies openly in the face
of his God, and rejoices in the fall of
beauty and innocence, I can really stay
no longer. The pale creamy face of
Mr. Spangle immediately shifted to a
more sanguine hue, and he pertly
said, he did nothing which made him
ashamed

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ashamed to face his God, and that if I would walk into a more private apartment, he would convince me that he was not afraid to face a *man*; looking at the same time at me, from head to foot, as if he thought me a boy. And now came on Mr. Draper's laughing time; for sometimes he soothed, sometimes encouraged, sometimes provoked both; yet appeared all along a dispassionate and zealous friend: I told him that I had nobler reasons than any proceeding from fear, for declining to dispute with him. If you should change your mind, sir, replied Spangle, taking a piece of paper from his pocket-book, and penciling his name upon it—I am always to be found *there*, sir, tossing the address to me with an air of disdain, and offering to go out. Nay, nay, fy, gentlemen, cried Draper, interposing: don't be grave about trifles; let me put
your

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your hands together: to be sure you have both said a word too much, and some people would have a meeting, but, hang it, the girl is not worth duelling for; at least, drop it for the present, and let us have a friendly cup of coffee together.

Excuse me, George, says the beau, walking away in a flurry: I must not have my morals disputed with impunity. Sir, you will hear from me shortly. So saying, he threw down sixpence on the board, tossed himself into a sedan, twitched the curtains round on all sides, and was bobbed off, before he had finished the story of felicity, and his adventures on a day devoted to fasting and prayer. As soon as he was gone, Draper, who had been upon the whole unusually serious, now gave way to the fun of his temper, and discovered at once his own character, and that of Spangle,

Spangle, in a style equally ludicrous and licentious. That fellow, fir, says he, is the strangest mortal upon the face of the earth: three or four years ago he was as jolly and hearty a looking man as myself; but his passion for women has made him what you see. Variety and difficulty equally distinguish his amours: for he never sees the same woman twice (except his wife, with whom he never sleeps); and if any of his objects are obtained without great pains, and proportionate charge, he takes the first opportunity, after possession, not only to leave, but disgrace her! Can there, said I, possibly be such a devil in the form of a man! Without answering me, Draper proceeded.

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C H A P. LXX.

Now you must know, I hate difficulty, though I have no objection to variety. I am in friendship with this coxcomb, therefore, merely on the score of convenience: for, as he never *repeats* his visit to his ladies, and ransacks both town and country for such as are the most virtuous and celebrated, for the satisfaction of a single hour, I always have them almost as soon as himself, without the trouble of dangling after them, or debauching them; so that I have all the enjoyment, without a spice of the wickedness: and if a man can be good on such easy terms, he is a fool you know to refuse them; because that would be doing the Devil's work for nothing. As to fighting, you need be under no apprehensions on that head; for

I pro-

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I promise you, he will not draw his sword to settle much worse words than have passed between you and him: he is the greatest coward in Europe; and, between you and I, can neither give *satisfaction* to man or woman: though he is constantly in quarrels, and has either bought himself off battles, or hired people to take up his cause, fifty times. But come, Benignus, more of this another opportunity: we have fooled away above an hour with this fopling, and we will now call on my taylor. He rose, and settled for our chocolate with the crooked woman at the bar, and then saying he should return in a minute, went into the yard.

The reader, it is hoped, is by this time sufficiently acquainted with me, to be certain I did not allow the minute of his absence to pass by without pouring forth the reflections that the transaction^s

transactions of the morning had excited. What a pair of precious fellows, said I, are here ! a seducer of the modest, and a receiver of the seduced. One glorying because his impudence drove a lady from her devotions, and the other in expectation of enjoying the benefit of the intrigue, should it be ultimately successful ! Then the dark plot laid against the virtue of this young lady—the last lovely prop of her widowed mother, now mourning the loss of a husband. I shudder at the danger which hovers over the relicts of this amiable house.—And yet how is the mischief—how is the impending misery to be prevented ?

Chance frequently orders the matter better, infinitely better, than contrivance : perhaps, that very stroke which we call chance, is in reality the wisdom of preternatural direction ; and in that case the difference lies only in the word,

word, while the meaning is the same. As I was deliberating on the means by which poor Diana might be rescued from dishonour, I put my hand into my pocket to take out my handkerchief, in doing which I dropped one of my gloves, and, in stooping to take it up, I saw a pocket-book lying under the table, which I found had accidentally been left by Spangle, when he gave me his address ; and I was just proceeding with it to the bar-keeper with a proper charge to deliver it to the gentleman, should he enquire for it, when the return of Mr. Draper made me think it better to give it *him*, as a friend who might have an earlier opportunity of delivering it. Fortunately, however, (as the reader will perceive in the sequel,) Draper had none of that troublesome punctilio about him, which would have deterred *me* from invading the secrets of this private repository,

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tory, on any consideration whatever. Indeed, this gentleman had a strange mixture of heterogeneous qualities in his character, the true colour of which was not to be ascertained at one sitting ; and he painted himself in the end much livelier and truer than it was in the power of any other person to depict him. The moment he cast his eye on the pocket-book, he seized it as a prize, and swore it must be one of the greatest curiosities in the world. A pocket-book, Benignus, is the man of pleasure's companion, or a polite directory to all places of fashionable resort ; as necessary to us, my dear boy, as our shirts, and appropriated to nearly the same use, viz. to conceal secrets. As soon as we have seen Skain, we will saunter homewards through the Mall, and enjoy this delightful treat which Spangle has unintentionally afforded us. We now left the

the coffee-room, and as we walked along, I asked Draper if he thought it quite delicate to open the pocket-book. There you go, answered he; that damned *delicacy* has made all the young men and women mere blushing babies: our novels, plays, and conversations, are now conducted with so much refinement; nay our very sermons---I should say our moral essays, are so confounded *delicate*, that we are for ever talking about it and about it, without having the courage to speak out: and yet what is all this *delicacy* but circumlocutory licentiousness; honest matter of fact, drest in a veil of gauze, the disguise seen through with half an eye? Nay, it were no difficult point to prove, that the ribaldry of Lord Rochester is infinitely less pernicious than the description of scenes drawn by those gentry who pique themselves upon their *fine feelings*. Bawdry, fir,
candied

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candied over by *sentiment*, is swallowed eagerly by the coyest maiden in the world; but,—oh rude wretch! she abominates the writer, who says the same thing in a plainer way. What would you infer from these remarks, Mr. Draper, said I? I hate argument, my dear fellow, said Draper, and so let us make the best of our way to Skain's, and then I will give you an instance of my *delicacy* with respect to the pocket-book. A few minutes smart walking brought us to a street, where Draper presently rapp'd at the door of a handsome house, and enquired for Mr. Skain; and, upon being told he was at home, we were begged to walk for a moment into a parlour, till Mr. Skain could be called. This parlour, its furniture, and the look of the servant, bespoke something so much beyond any idea I had conceived of a taylor, that I made no scruple of asking

asking Draper what apartments in so fashionable a house Skain could possibly occupy. This was a sweet question for the constitution of my companion, who enjoyed once more, at my expence, the exquisite pleasure of laughing; though where the joke lies in laughing at a man's seeming ignorant of what he never had an opportunity of knowing, I really cannot tell. In the midst of the merriment, in came a somebody, in a green velvet cap, linen night-gown, laced waistcoat, silk stockings, and Morocco slippers: Aye, Skain, how do you do? I have brought you a young customer, a man of fashion, just come to his estate: he is my most particular friend, and you must be with him to-morrow at Mrs. Darlington's, in Cavendish Square. I should as soon have suspected Draper himself to have been a wielder of the goose and scissars, as this indentical Mr.

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Skain, who listened to my friend's harangue, without any thing approaching to that cringe and congee so incidental to the character in the country. So far, however, was *he* from cringing, that he rested his bum against a table, with all the important lounge of a nobleman, played a sort of tune with his fingers upon the side of his gown, and stroaked his beard with the other hand, till Mr. Draper had finished; after which, without once dropping his dignity, he began.

C H A P. LXXI.

To-morrow, Sir! God bless your soul, my dear Mr. Draper, I could not spare five minutes to-morrow for five hundred pounds. I have such an ocean of work in hand, and all to be done by Saturday night,

night, that I could dispense with forty hands more than I have already.---Besides, there's Lady Lustre's new liveries, and Lady Fade's mourning, must positively be finished this week. I am highly proud of the honour, and shall take a pleasure in serving the gentleman; but you know our predicament: our customers are all in a hurry, and I am so much in the *death and marriage way*, that I can scarce call a moment my own for a mouthful of victuals. I am likewise at this instant equipping an heir for this world, and an old fellow for the other (who, by the bye, ought to have died seven years ago), and the widow is as anxious to put on black, to tell her acquaintance she is her own mistress, as the heir to get out of his fables, and tell the women he is a match for any fortune amongst them. If the young gentleman could wait, therefore, for a few days,

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till——Looke, Skain, answered Draper, I infist on your being with my friend in the morning; he is just from the country, and cannot go into public for want of proper clothes. Well, Sir, replied Skain, in a more submissive voice, if that is the case, I will sit up with my men night and day, or throw some of the work in hand by—for one can make free with old customers—rather than distress a gentleman; and, indeed, I perceive—Here Mr. Skain lifted up my coat by the pocket flap—I perceive the gentleman has been in bad hands; he has been, as I often say, among the butchers of broad-cloth, and ruiners of raiment.---In this facetious strain was our gentleman-taylor proceeding, when the parlour-door opened, and enlarged our society by the addition of a person who was announced to be Mr. Thrift, the taylor's attorney, and who had bab-
bled

bled out his business, not much in the way of his profession, without any regard to strangers, the moment he entered. To the credit of the trade, however, I must confess this was one of the rotten limbs, and not one of the sound members of the law; a dirty, dark, drudging character, to whom no man of reputation would intrust his business, nor any but creatures like himself become clients. Well, friend Skain, we have nabb'd him at last; Master Dodge is a most indefatigable fellow; as sure of his prey as a kite. Aye, aye, he has him at last, locked up in Holborn: a fine prospect of a grated window before him: seven writs after him--heavy charges, Mr. Skain! I don't care a farthing for that (cries Skain in an extasy); as we have got him in limbo, my heart is easy, and I shall rest quiet in my bed. In limbo he is then, I promise you, replied

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Thrift, and likely to remain there till an act; for I know several tradesmen, besides you, who have bills against him, and I now think it my duty, as an *honest* man, to acquaint them, they may renew their writs, and lodge their detainers. To be sure, replied Skain, to be sure; it behoves every Christian to serve another in this case; for the good of trade is concerned in these cases, and such a fellow should be punished as an example: he's a mere bite, Mr. Thrift--an arrant bilk; though he has an address, and I once thought him very much of a gentleman. And how came you so soon to change your mind, questioned Mr. Draper, who seemed resolved to sit out all disputes. Why, as sure as I stand here, Mr. Draper, I have taken pounds upon pounds of that man's money; and for some time he was as punctual as the pendulum; deliver a bill, and
take

LIBERAL OPINIONS. 31

take your cash: nay, sometimes he would insist upon my writing a receipt in full, as soon as the clothes were sent home; and more than once I have been obliged to press credit upon him, that he might not suppose I was afraid to trust him: but for these two years I can't hear that he has paid any body, and yet the fellow tricks out himself, and his wife, and his three children, as gay and gaudy as Mr. Anybody's family: my account alone runs pretty high; but I have his body for my goods, however! And I fear, cried Thrift, shrugging up his shoulders, that is all you are ever likely to have; for I don't think the man has sixpence to save his soul: nay, I am sure he has not; for Mr. Dodge gave me such an excellent account of the manner by which he was nabb'd, that it is worth your hearing: for you must know——Stop a moment, dear Mr.

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Thrift, till I ring for some chocolate: do, pray, Mr. Draper, and you, sir, said Skain, pressing me to keep my seat, stay, I beseech you, and hear the story: there's nothing in my idea so high as scenes of low life. To this speech Draper (who loved adventures to the bottom of his heart, and who seldom interrupted people in the relation of them till all was over) answered only by a slight bow; and I sat too much amazed to talk, considering the whole society as a collection of devils, and equally despising the coolness of Draper, the malignity of Skain, and the scoundrelism of the scrivener.

C H A P. LXXII.

Just as the taylor's footman (who, I can assure the reader, was a black, with
a silver

a silver shoulder-knot) had brought the chocolate on a splendid waiter, a fresh tap at the door introduced to us another worthy gentleman, under the name of Mr. Dodge, a queer quaint-looking little fellow, with a sly leer, arch visage, and a black wig. Aha! cried Thrift, if here is not little Dodge himself! Mr. Dodge, says Skain, (taking him by the dirty hand with great cordiality,) I am infinitely indebted to your diligence!—I wished in my heart the catchpole had broke his neck for his pains.—The gentlemen, resumes Mr. Thrift, are desirous to know the methods you used to take Master Sudberry. Oh! cries Dodge, it will do your heart good to hear it: in all the time I have been in office, never saw such a go in my life. Pray begin, said Skain, eagerly, quite forgetting that he could not spare five minutes for five hundred pounds,—pray begin,

Mr. Dodge.—I can hardly tell you for laughing, replied this Mr. Dodge, holding his sides. Mat Slappim, Will Trugge, and I, were hunting up a girl in Hedge-lane, who owed some three or four pound to her washer, business being bad with her of late, as she could not get out because of illness, seeing as how she was a little fallow with the consumption, and so gemmin refused her—and in looking for this same girl, Sal Sandy, who should I see with his mouth wide open, as if he was a mind to make a meal of the air, but the *dentikal fissiognemy* of this Mr. Sudberry. I tips Slappim the fligo, and nudges the elbow of Trugge, las much as to say, Soho!--I have him in view. The fellow still kept sucking in the smoke, as if it was hasty-pudding, and had no *spicion* of we, till the maid opened the door to fetch a pennurth of porter, and then we tussel'd her against the

the door-post, and made directly all three together to the garret : but the maid by this time *speaking* us, cried out to her master, Lock the door, sir, lock the door, here's a parcel of *baillies* in the house : with that his spouse (as I think it was by her running) fastened the door, and drew the bolt across in a cursed fluster ; and, to make it the more securer, (for women, you know, gentlemen, are for always overdoing the thing,) she set the chairs and tables against it. Now, your honours must know that we dare as well be d---d as break a lock, though its law to lift a latch : so what does me I, but, seeing as how the woman belonging to the house was a poor honey, I lays me down at the top of the stairs, and threatened to starve them out ; for, you know, we are all forced to eat, an' the devil himself stood at the door. All this time Sudberry (for whom I always

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had the needful in my pocket) said never a word, but kept puffing and catching at the breath like a broken-winded horse; for I finds he has your *arso-makcack* disorder upon him; and they say, air is the best thing in the world for that. Mrs. Sudberry (as fine a creature as ever you saw, gentlemen,) began to *argusy* with us, touching our going off the premises, and, upon my soul, talked over the thing in such a moving manner, every now and then stopping to sob, that if it had not been doing an injury to Mr. Skain here, I could have found in my heart to have left um. But I am but an humble servant of his Majesty's, and must do my duty according to my conscience. This made me go through it. We stayed in this manner about four hours, till the watchmen went about; then, as sore as you are alive, the woman called out to Martin Nap-guard,

guard, and said robbers and ruffians were broke into the house, and insisted upon his taking us to the watch-house. Lord help her head! How little she knows who and who's together. Robbers, ma'am! cried Napguard: I can't take them out of the house, if it were full—but, if you deliver them to me on the outside the door, then I can charge them in the King's name, and take them away. This set us all a laughing. Pray, Madam, said Slappin, (who is as great a wit as any in England, and has as much to say for himself)—pray deliver us on the outside the door, and then we will all go jollily to prison together. To make short of the matter, it began to grow late; and so, hearing as how they were drawing the curtains, and preparing for bed, without caring for supper, I and my companions went to bed too.—And where might you sleep, pray? said

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Mr.

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Mr. Draper. At the stair-head, your honour, replied the bailiff; and a very good lodging too. But in the middle of the night Sudberry began to grunt worse than ever,---the children set up their pipes between whiles for bread, and the mother was one time kissing one, then the other, then chearing up the husband, while we got some liquor from next door, made the landlady tipsy, and was sure of our game in the morning. But *cuss* me if that Mrs. Sudberry is not a match for all the officers in town. She's a deep one, I promise you---In the morning, d---n my eyes, gentlemen, if she did not fairly bilk us, do what we would. How was that, Master Dodge? said Skain, a little disappointed---There is a little back room, continued Dodge, about a yard wide, with a little peep-hole of a casement, just big enough to heave in a twopenny loaf, and a small tea-kettle: into

into this window she drew her victuals, throwing a string to the maid to tie, fed her children, boiled a little broth in a can for her husband, and threatened to do so till Sunday, when you know the law—the more's the pity for the nation—does not suffer us to do business.

This scheme put us all to our wits end, and we now began to be saucy a little, hoping to make her husband in a passion, and so open the door. Trugge, therefore, (who has a foul mouth of his own, when he pleases,) talked *balderdash* to Mrs. Sudberry, through the key-hole, which she did not answer, for, indeed, she seems a civil spoken woman, truly: but Slappin said *sommit* to rise the husband at last, and without more ado, quite forgetting his sickness, he burst the door open in an instant, with a drawn sword in his hand---(an old black one though, without a handle)---and swore

he

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he would stab the first man upon earth, that should dare to *refuse* his wife. This was just what we wanted; and while I beat off his sword with my stick, in this manner—(here the bailiff stood on the defensive)—Trugge tripped up his heels behind, and Slappin gave him a *douse* on the shoulder.—Then off we carried him, hooting through the streets, and you would have died a laughing to have seen us march: it was for all the world like a *burien*. Slappin and Trugge walked with him in their arms (for he could not stand, and had never a shilling for a coach); I strutted as head mourner, or rather as parson; Mrs. Sudberry came crying after, and the three brats whimpering along, got fast hold of the mother's gown, and sung through the nose, in a sorrowful merry manner, the dead man's psalm.

At the conclusion of this narrative,

Mr.

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Mr. Dodge twitched his wig, stroked the stock which was tied round the neck that would have disgraced a halter, and, looked at every spectator for applause; as if he had really been doing the most meritorious action upon earth.

As the words of the speaker were so much to the taste of the audience, this young man continued to repeat them.

C H A P. LXXIII.

There are many occasions where language is extremely inadequate to express our sensations. The present was one of them. My anxiety, as Shakespear has it, "beggared all description," and I was unable to tell my detestation, or my pity. As soon as Dodge had done, Draper rose from his chair, with a sedate set of features than usual, and demanded Dodge's direction, which being obtained, he ordered Skain to send his fellow for a hackney-coach; and

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while

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while it was gone for, he assumed a still severer look, and addressed the company in this manner. Do you know, now, gentlemen, that I look upon you as three of the completest scoundrels in the whole world, and not a pin to choose as to the rascality of either. Is this your combined juggle to torment a fellow-creature? If you were in my house, I would lead you all out by the nose. Is this the practice of an attorney? Shame upon you! Why do I call you an attorney? Reptiles like you are the men who bring disgrace and dishonour on the profession—you lay yourselves out for every dirty job—encourage the trader in his uncompassionate resolutions—involve both debtor and creditor, plaintiff and defendant, in ruinous and unnecessary contest, and are the vile instruments by which men are often engaged in dispute, who, without
your

your villainous interposition, would live harmoniously and neighbourly together.

—Sir, answered Thrift, I am not used to this treatment, and I shall be tempted to bring my action, if—Action, rascal! replied Mr. Draper, be gone, and take care you don't tempt *me* to an action that may rob the gallows of its property. Well, well—very fine, very fine, upon my soul, cried Thrift, trembling and rising; pretty usage this, for a man of my profession!—however, it is well I am provided with witnesses: pray hold yourselves in readiness, gentlemen; I shall summon you as evidences of the assault; and so, sir, your servant! I'll do you over with a slip of parchment, I warrant you. As he opened the door, Dodge made an effort to steal out with him, sagaciously presuming, that if Thrift was a scoundrel, he could not
himself

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himself be thought an honest man; but Mr. Draper plucked him back by the skirts, and insisted on his taking his share of admonition. And you, Mr. Man-catcher, cried Draper, by what statute or clause in an act of parliament are you permitted to treat the unfortunate in this barbarous manner? What right have you to insult a poor man and his family by your loose jests, ribaldry, and obscenity? Who gave you authority to trip up a gentleman's heels, and by what licence is it, that you dare to make a riot and disturbance at any person's door at all, much less to continue there like an assassin all night? If it had been my case, firrah, I would have made no hesitation of shooting you through the head, or running you through the body as a thief. Pursue your infamous avocation openly and fairly, but I will be at some little pains

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pains to see whether you are to turn housebreaker, and knock a man down to get at him.

While Mr. Draper was expostulating in this manner, Dodge played with his hat, bit his nails, changed colour, hung his head, shook his ears, and flunk after Thrift, in a pitiful and cowardly condition: for let this be adopted as a rule, that those who exist by promoting the anxiety of others, and take the bread out of the mouth of the wretched, or are in any other way the ministers of inhumanity and oppression, are invariably a mean dastardly set of poltroons, afraid to meet the eye of a man, or to look but for a single moment into their own frightful bosoms. When Dodge disappeared, Draper addressed himself to the taylor, who, ever since the discourse began, sat leaning his elbow on the table, as if he had been stunned; for Draper
being

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being a man of very extensive connections, Skain, who was a mere usurer at the bottom, would almost as soon have set his prisoner at liberty, as have offended so excellent a customer.—As for you, Skain, proceeded Draper, I blush for you:—you, sir, who have realized a fortune, by a commerce with people of fortune; nay, who have, by your own confession, received obligations from the very man whom you are thus vigilant and industrious to persecute! Is not half your profit contingent upon credit? and are you not so much aware of this, as frequently to force that credit upon gentlemen much to their disinclination, and still more to their disadvantage? But why do I waste time in remonstrances with a fellow, whom imposition has enabled to set up a chariot? a wretch whose extortions have been the total destruction of many a minor, and who is a scandal

scandal to the fair-dealing tradesman. I have done with you, fir, and I will take care that all my friends shall have done with you too—I desire you will send in my accompt directly, and I will never have the least intercourse with you after it is paid. Such was now the meanness of this fellow, that when Mr. Draper was taking me by the hand, and preparing to depart, he said, if he pleased to continue his custom, he would release Mr. Sudberry. That you shall not, Mr. Taylor, said I, contemptuously, I'll assure you: Come, Mr. Draper, let us go immediately to the bailiff's. Puppy, cried Draper (turning from Skain as he was going out), Mr. Sudberry would scorn to owe even his liberty to such a wretch—I have already heard enough to convince me he would rot inch by inch in his jail, rather than be released by his persecutor. Benignus, I am at your service ;

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service; let us go and prevent this fellow, and his precious group of friends, from triumphing over the sick and the unhappy. Drive, coachman, to Dodge's lock-up-house, Holborn-bars.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Among the peculiar pleasures of human life are agreeable surprizes. This last stroke of conduct so reconciled me to Mr. Draper, that I looked at him with transport, and again thought him one of the worthiest of men. A little eccentric and irregular, said I to myself, a little out of the common road, but not the less kind or hospitable for that: the sallies which look most suspicious, are probably mere sportiveness, the effects of health, high spirits, heat of blood, and an animated fancy. Sense he has evidently ;

dently; wit is at his command; he is preparing to be generous, let me then not be too severe upon his vivacity, but allow so good a character upon the whole, its pleasantries and laugh.

We stopped at a house fortified with bars of iron, and upon entering it, beheld Thrift and Dodge laying their heads close together. Where's Mr. Sudberry? said Mr. Draper. Sir, answered Thrift, may I crave two minutes audience of you alone? They walked together into a small yard, well secured by a roof of beams, and this was the conversation of the scrivener:

I see, sir, you are a gentleman who knows something; I am sorry for any little warm words we may have exchanged, and I ask your pardon. To your business, sir, answered Mr. Draper. Why, sir, rejoined Thrift, I find there is a little mistake in this busi-

ness; the officer has acted, fir, without my assent, and so there is a kind of a—a—Here a violent noise in the house interrupted the discourse, and brought Draper back to me to enquire the occasion, which happened to be a debate betwixt Mr. Sudberry, the prisoner, and Mr. Dodge, the officer, who went into the said prisoner's little room, upon his leaving Thrift with Mr. Draper. The sentiments which now issued from the key-hole of his room, were to the following purport:

Oh inhuman creature! to drag me, in this situation, with all my family after me, when you were conscious I had it not in my power; nay, when three weeks before, you came with that vile lawyer to my old lodgings, and suffered my poor wife, this dear woman, to pawn her last gown, and almost her last apron, to give you civility money, that
you

you *should not see me*. Besides this, have you not arrested me for a false debt? nay, do you not know in your hearts that Mr. Skain has twice the value of my debt in his hands? has he not a picture I gave Mrs. Sudberry, on the very morning of our marriage, and which she (*unknown* to me, till lately) placed as a pledge with him, to prevent my being troubled long ago, when things began to run wrong with me? Oh, that I had some friend that—but I may still live to see you severely punished. At the very beginning of this discourse, Thrift was shifting towards the door, and, upon mention of the wink money, he was driving off as fast as he could, when Draper caught him by the collar, while I, inspired by an impulse too powerful to be resisted, set my back against the door, (which was none of the slightest,) and fairly burst it open. This violence

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discovered Mrs. Sudberry and her children weeping on a dirty floor, Mr. Sudberry supporting himself against a chair, arraigning the villainy of the bailiff and lawyer, and the bailiff himself scratching his head, and beginning to think—not that he was a greater rascal than ordinary, but that he had been a more than ordinary blockhead, in not taking the usual care to keep within the letter of the law.

Interesting, however, as the scene was, it was considerably heightened by the addition of that glorious character Mr. Thrift, who (unbraced from top to bottom, without his periwig, which had forsaken his pate in the scuffle,) was now drawn in by the intrepid Draper, to give a splendid finishing to the drama. Several other prisoners of the place, likewise, and all the servants, (even to the centinel of the street-door, which was the

trusty

trusty Mr. Trugge himself,) came pouring into the parlour, and were witnesses to the general confusion. For my part, I ran insensibly to the sinking Mrs. Sudberry, while the poor fainting husband encouraged his babies, as well as he was able, not to be frightened; assured them their papa was well, that nobody would hurt their mamma, and that the stranger men were only playing in sport. Oh my dear papa—my dear papa, give brother and I a piece of bread and butter; pray do; indeed we will be good and deserve it—indeed we will; won't we, Patty?—I litty piece of bren e butte too, lisped a little angel, still unweaned from the knee, I hungry as well as Patty. A servant girl, as yet unhardened by her servitude in the family, touched by the innocent prattle, ran down into the kitchen, and, in the confusion, brought a luncheon of bread, which I seized instantly from her,

and kneeling down, distributed it amongst them. Pray, fir, give poor papa and mamma a bit, said the eldest. I will, cried the second, offering half to Mrs. Sudberry, who was silently thanking God on her knees—No, me vil feed my own papa, cried the suckling.—Poor Sudberry attempted to kiss the child, but wanting strength to kneel, fell backwards into my arms, yet not so as to hurt himself. When the little things had finished their repast, and had sipped each a little water, which the kind-hearted girl likewise provided, they wiped their sweet lips each upon its bib, kissed me round for my goodness, and putting their pretty palms together, thanked God for a good dinner.

Meantime Draper was not idle. The truth is, he had the way now fair before him; the bailiff and scrivener saw themselves detected; they knew the spirited
character

character of Mr. Draper, and they were ready to come into any terms, rather than forfeit their honourable calling.

In the first place, said Draper, either restore the gentleman his picture, or release him: in the next, repay him the money you extorted from him, that you might *not see him*, when you had a writ against his person. I have not got the *picture*, your honour, said the bailiff, and if I should discharge the gemmin without consent of plaintiff, I should be fixed with debt and costs, as dead as a nail: and moreover nor that, the gemmin, I understand, is liable to more things against him, than this here; and if so be as how there should be fifty retainers in the office, one upon t'other, I must answer 'em all, and that there Mr. Thrift knows well enough; else I am sure I would not mind the value of Mr. Skain's matter, the wipe of my

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finger.

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finger. As you please, fir, says Draper; then I will be bail for this gentleman, and my friend shall be the other, and we will be answerable for every thing. Make out the bail-bond, and look you to the consequence.

C H A P. LXXV.

This proposal coming from a man of fortune, and a man acquainted with the world, was by no means agreeable either to Mr. Dodge or Mr. Thrift; for, besides that they dreaded bringing the matter before a court, they were equally in fear of the many evidences which now had it in their power to appear against them. Mr. Draper, however, was the last man in the kingdom to be trifled with, and indeed was altogether the most universal character I ever knew;

as

as he could suit himself, with wonderful facility, to all circumstances in society, and was either remarkable for his indolence or industry, gaiety or gravity, as seemed most agreeable to the cast and constitution of the company.

The loquacious humour, therefore, in which he was in, at Mrs. Darlington's, when I set him down as a compound of laugh, whim, and liberty, was only the assumed disposition of the moment, which he thought (perhaps justly) was better adapted to the sprightly hour of breakfast, and the liveliness of the ladies whom he visited, than the dullest detail of morals, or the most formal lecture upon the beauty of holiness. And this versatility sat so prodigiously easy upon him, and was an art so immediately upon the heel of Nature, that nothing but the God of Nature himself could know it to be imitation.

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But I can oblige my readers with no idea of this gentleman so well, as by comparing him with a person, who, a little before the time of my retiring from the town, and the world, began to figure on the stage, and to astonish: such of my readers, therefore, who have seen Mr. Garrick command the passions of the soul, and assume at will the characters belonging to them; those who have beheld him at one hour, the pert, flip-pant, careless, voluble coxcomb; at another, the injured, tender, choleric, heart-broken king and father; those who have seen him on one night represent, and to all palpable apprehension, *he*, the haughty, disdainful, designing tyrant; and then the generous, elegant, and manly lover; now inviting our admiration at the heroism of youth, and now exciting our compassion at the debility of age: those, in a word, who have

certainly

certainly been in a theatre (while this gentleman was acting), and yet have almost quarrelled with conviction, by a violent inclination to *dispute*, either their being in a theatre, or that the man on the stage was only a clever counterfeit; those, I say, who have been witnesses to the changes of this amazing performer, will properly conceive of the infinite variety in the single character of that social Proteus, Mr. Draper.

While I have been letting the reader a little more into the secret of my friend's character, he will please to suppose Messrs. Thrift and Dodge were retired to a corner of the room, in deep consultation; and that the Sudberrys were complimenting first Mr. Draper, and then me, as if we had been messengers from Heaven. The middle of the parlour contained the crowd of captive spectators, all of whom—a strange mixture

of men and women—triumphed extremely in the embarrassment of the jailor, and heartily hoped to see both him and the scrivener turned off together. At length Mr. Draper said, he should wait their deliberations no longer; he was in a hurry, and ordered him to prepare the bond, without any delay. This produced another whisper from Thrift, who, taking Mr. Draper gently by the coat-button, and leading him with many cringes to the window, asked, with all possible submission, whether he (Mr. Draper) knew what he was about! Do you know, my good fir, said he, do you know what you are liable to by bailing this prisoner? The clouds are very heavy over his head, and the tempest must light upon you. I can have no interest; nay, I speak against myself; for I shall touch, if I make out a bail-bond for master Dodge (who, between you and me, can't spell

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spell his own name, without I am at his elbow) : suppose, therefore, I was to step to Mr. Skain's, and intercede for the prisoner, whom I pity from the very bottom of my soul, and perhaps, at my instigation, and making use of your name, he may be induced to take the debt at so much a week, or give him a little time to turn about, or—I tell you, fellow, replied Draper, he shall have nothing to do with you, or Skain, or any such rascals. This is the prisoner; shew me the warrant, that I may know the amount of the debt. That young gentleman and myself are his bail, and so refuse the matter at your peril—Do it this instant, or you will oblige me to send for my own attorney, who will answer you in a minute. Perhaps you know Mr. Tullyman of the Temple? At the name of Tullyman Thrift shrunk into himself, and was silenced. Then spoke his illustrious compeer,

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compeer, Mr. Dodge.—Well, well, if his honour chuses for to go for to run all *risqueses*, he must. It is none of my affair; I gets nothing by prisoners more nor my dues: and so Mr. Thrift must e'en get the bail-bond drawn out, seeing as how his honour is resolved upon it. But his honour, I hopes, will have no objection for me, for to make a bit of an inquisition after his honour's *character*, seeing as how I never see'd his honour before; and though no doubt he is a man of fortin and property, his honour is a stranger to me, and nobody knows nobody in London. So if he thinks good for me to send Trugge into neighbourhood, and just ax three or four, or half a dozen of the shop-keepers, to know who you are, and what your honour is, I shall be proud to take the bail.—While Mr. Dodge was delivering this splendid harangue, the blood flushed over

over Mr. Draper's handsome face, and he flourished his cane in his hand, in token of no very pleasant preparation; and it is highly probable Mr. Dodge would have had a perfect knowledge of this gentleman's character, and of the healthy state of his body, together with his great skill in the science of castigating a scoundrel, had not his friend Thrift that moment interposed, by declaring that he knew Mr. Draper extremely well, and would take his security for a thousand pounds; and that if he would only answer for the prisoner's appearance at the return of the writ on the subsequent Friday, he would take the rest upon himself; and, as he admired a generous action as much as any man, would get over the article of omitting to search the office as well as he could.—This, however, was afterwards related to me by Mr. Draper; for Thrift did not, for certain

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certain reasons, chuse to utter this speech before a large audience ; to avoid which piece of ostentation (like a man willing to do his generous act in as private a way as he could), he once more had recourse to Draper's button, and led him obsequiously thereby into another room. At his return Mr. Draper politely and tenderly informed Mr. Sudberry, that he was now at liberty to remove his family into more agreeable apartments, and said he had taken the liberty to order one of the fellows to call a coach for that purpose. Here was another instance, where words were mere expletives; and so I can only observe, that those readers who have the best hearts and finest heads, will have the justest conceptions of the scene which now passed betwixt the benefactor and the benefited. Meantime Thrift whispered over the perils which would probably be avoided by this step, and that
it

it would be good law to turn out the prisoner, rather than be turned out themselves, which, it is presumed, might be reasonably expected from a public explanation of this mysterious affair. Mr. Thrift's whisper was of that kind which on the stage is called a soliloquy—that is, one talking as loud to himself as if he was in warm debate with a large society. But this was the defect of his voice, which could by no management of modulation, (being naturally harsh, heavy, and hoarse,) be brought to the still small whisper, or, theatrically speaking, into the *all alone*, or even *half aside*; for let it likewise be remarked by the bye, that the stage talking to *one's self*, is considerably more audible, than the *half aside*, when *others* are on the scene.

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CHAP. LXXVI.

The prisoners also now began to sing forth the praises of generosity, and enter into various observations. One said, it was well for some folks that they could find friends in strangers; others remarked, that some people were lucky, and some unlucky: Aye, says a dry-looking fellow, squinting over a woman's shoulder, I have been here sixteen months myself, and could never get any body to do such a turn for me; but then, indeed, I happen to have a plain woman for my wife. Here he cock'd his eye at Mrs. Sudberry, and Draper, who perfectly understood the insinuation, but thought the insinuator in no situation to answer for it, only look'd a reproach, and led the way to the coach, which was now driving up to the door. I was going to distribute

tribute a few guineas amongst the multitude, but Draper pressed me significantly by the hand, and bid me assist Mrs. and Mr. Sudberry to the carriage; declining that agreeable office himself, probably to prevent giving umbrage and countenance to the sentiments of the other prisoner. As we passed along, and were placing the lady and her little ones into the coach, the ingenious Mr. Dodge, with much simper and civility, applied his fingers to his hat, and his nails to his head (for hitherto, from polite reasons, he thought proper to wear his round beaver, which was rim'd with a black binding), and, in a tone betwixt servility and demand, thus expressed himself to Mr. Draper: I hopes as how your honour will remember me for my goodness and *umanity*, and the like of that, seeing as how I had it in my power, whether or not to let the gemmin go, without

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without paying the money ; and seeing as how I am still sponfor as well as your honour, for his forthcoming as *plantiff*, if your honour should die, being as we are all *mortable*, before Friday, and the gemmin should go off with his body, which, to be sure, by law is none of his property at present : and besides, furthermore than this, *ater* twenty-four hours, I could, if it *wan't* for my *umaniy*, carry prisoner over the water ; and as likewise I have lost bail-money, and let out gemmin, as it were, on padrowl and prorogation of honour, seeing as life is a lottery, and I may or may not clap eyes on him again, because hap you know is just as it happens : wherefore I hope my *jennyrosity* will be rewarded.— While Dodge was delivering these elegant sentiments, I was handing in Mrs. Sudberry and her sick partner, while Draper, with great gentleness, was placing

ing the children as commodiously and closely as possible by the side of their parents ; which being done, and the door fastened, Mr. Draper first enquiring whether he might be permitted to do for once as he pleased with the little family, directed the coachman to go softly over the stones, and stop at the corner-house on the left-hand side, in Dover-street. Thus was all the *umanity* and *jennyrosity* of Mr. Dodge totally lost in air, and his last words were quite swallowed up by the less eloquent language of the carriage-wheels and the driver. A great painter, whose *forte* lay in the pathetic and tender, might now have been furnished with exquisite hints for a family picture: never surely were seen a coachful of characters more suited to the pencil. Mrs. Sudberry (a tall, interesting, lovely figure) was seated betwixt her husband and infants ; in the eye of

poor

poor Sudberry himself glisten'd the drop of gratitude, supported on the one hand by his wife, on the other by Draper. One of the babes, with a cherubic cheerfulness of countenance, was gently playing with the hand of its mother, and one was softly stroaking the languid face of the father; while the third (which was seated on my knee) seemed highly delighted with the shewy trinkets, that depended from the glittering watch-chain which I had purchased of the toymen. In this situation, in which Sudberry's disorder, that even a joyful change of events could not remove, was the only matter of inquietude, we arrived in Dover-street, at the elegant residence of Mr. Draper. That gentleman was out in a moment, and welcomed his company with such an air of unassuming hospitality, that his visitants forgot it was a first salutation, and were pleasingly seduced

duced into intimacy, ere they had well concluded and completely interchanged the civilities of introduction. The apartments of Mr. Draper bespoke at the same instant the taste and temper of the master ; the furniture was in the highest splendor of fashion, without any thing approaching to frippery. We were conducted into a dining-room, in which was exhibited all the prettinesses of an ample fortune ; but Mr. Draper's behaviour was infinitely more engaging than any other object in his room. He led the panting Sudberry up along the room, and seated him on a sofa ; he pressed him, and at length prevailed upon him to swallow a cordial ; while I and the rest of the Sudberrys, even to the youngest infant (which seemed more attracted by the conduct of the benefactor, than by the finery of the furniture, and the flowers in the carpet) were under the influence

fluence of an enchantment so truly soothing and benevolent, that the whole appeared to be rather the delicious vision of a glowing fancy, than a real scene in the great drama of modern life.

C H A P. LXXVII.

And yet no urbanity, nor any arts of delicate attention from our host, could prevent the tear from often gathering in the eye, and often falling upon the cheek of the beautiful Mrs. Sudberry. The state of her husband's health absorbed every other idea, and she could not be restricted, even by her politeness, from hanging around his neck, wiping away the drop which asthmatic agony had collected on his brow, and relieving him by every possible mark of an endearment

ment which no sickness could impair, nor any human misfortune in any degree abate. Presently, however, the cordial had such effect, at least so far assisted the tender and restoring assiduities of a beloved wife, that he began to breathe with less difficulty, and to seem more capable of enjoying his good fortune. Mr. Draper now improved this interval of ease by the charms of his conversation, and by that characteristic sprightliness which rendered him so enchantingly agreeable. I am now about to do a very rude thing, said he, my good friends, and yet I cannot possibly help it: indispensable business, from which even the pleasures of society must not seduce me, requires my attention. I shall not be gone above half an hour: my friend Benignus will extremely well supply my absence, and I will take care to call on Mrs. Darlington, and make excuses for

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you know what misdemeanours, Benignus, before I return—Nay, keep your seats—no polite confusion—no compliment pray now. He bowed, and withdrew.

As Sudberry was now much recovered, at least as his pain very favourably intermitted, his lovely wife happening to sit opposite a pier-glass, observing something in the reflection, which brought an unusual quantity of blood into her face, she threw her eye over her children transiently, but said nothing. I had, however, some little reason afterwards to believe this blush arose from that delicate consciousness which sometimes we feel, from a sense of wanting those things which the world considers as the necessary furniture of every person who is admitted into a good apartment; namely, such a suit of silks and broadcloth, linens and laces, as correspond with the
chairs

LIBERAL OPINIONS. 75

chairs and tables, cushions and carpets, plate and china, in the said apartment.

Now it happened, (as the reader cannot indeed forget,) that our little family had divested themselves of all superfluous decorations, even to the picture of the principal, which was wont to grace the arm of the wife, but which now was in the possession of Mr. Skain the taylor: yet Mrs. Sudberry was still as neat as a clean linen gown could make her; her infants were habited in slips, or robes, evidently made by a maternal hand, and from the materials of a frugal housewifry, that decorates the child with an alteration of that which is no longer suitable to the parent; and Sudberry was in possession of at least as tolerable a suit of grey, as that suit of black which I wore myself; and they looked as if fate had prevented my getting newer apparel,

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till I had kept his modest grey in countenance. This ingenuous anxiety, however, was soon over; for Sudberry got better and better, the children played and prattled, the sun shot cheerily into the room, Mrs. Sudberry smiled, and began to think of conversation, and Draper speedily returned.

C H A P. LXXVIII.

By this time, preparations were making for a fix o'clock dinner; but as nothing worth setting down in this History happened till the cloth was removed, I shall ask the reader's leave to set the glasses upon the table, and pass briskly on to something more material. The human imagination, even in its most poetical moment, can conceive nothing so highly

highly calculated to give fresh spirit to Burgundy, as Mr. Draper's various conversation. He was the most consistent man in the world, amidst the greatest inconsistencies; that is, he so nicely observed the grand articles of times, seasons, and circumstances, that his character was constantly of a piece with the character of the society then present. He was now in company with a married woman, a man under singular embarrassments, and three little children rising up under the eye of a modest mother; and, moreover, the whole family were under recent obligations to him. To support himself in this situation, without violating his delicacy, one would suppose no easy matter; but, in point of address, he was ease itself. He distributed his attention to the wife and husband with so impartial a care, that neither could boast a compliment extra-

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ordinary, or complain of a politeness wanting. As the wine slowly circulated (for it was not pushed round the table with an outrageous hospitality), Draper infused balm into the glass, by chatting cheerfully upon the prospect of better days. I have frequently thought, madam, said he, (turning to Mrs. Sudberry) that an unfortunate man is amongst the most sacred of human characters. The hand of God is more immediately upon him : he is marked out for trial ; and if, when temptations have thickened upon him, he still preserves his patience and his courage, he is indeed an interesting character. I do not think Mr. Sudberry any otherwise unfortunate, than as he is made so by his illness ; if I did, his situation would be so sanctified in my idea, that I should not look at him without awe. Don't you think him unfortunate, answered Mrs. Sudberry ?

berry? Not at all, replied Draper; he has enough to make him quite the contrary: nay, he this moment has in his eye sufficient to create content, in the worst condition.

Mr. Draper had now gained his point; for, touching nicely upon the right string, he found it in tune: Sudberry and his lady exchanged looks, surveyed the pledges of their tender fidelity, and indulged a sigh. Nor were those tender pledges shut out from their share of attention. They were invited to sip some sweet wine by Mr. Draper, who desired them to drink according to seniority. The voice of a child, trained up with a sense of duty and civility, is, to the ear of a parent, the music of the spheres. Mr. and Mrs. Sudberry gazed with a laudable pride on their babes, as they paid proper preparatory respects, and looked at Mr. Draper, as much as to

say, The little creatures are of our own bringing up—they have no master or mistress but ourselves. When each had taken its allowance (which Mrs. Sudberry stinted to as small a quantum as might very well be contained in a thimble, the eldest maintained her dignity by sitting still at the table, and the two other paraded round the room, and very critically examined the ornaments; not failing to feel and finger every thing in their progress. Hilarity now presided at our board, and as the Burgundy exerted its generous power, Sudberry was so much recovered, as to mix in our discourse. At this crisis Mr. Draper contrived to increase the general felicity by a well-timed trifling circumstance.

And how many years may you two turtles have been married? cried he, smiling upon his guests. *Eleven years,*
 fir,

fir, answered Sudberry ; and they have flown away, as if they had enviously borrowed the wings of the wind. Eleven *minutes* they have been, by my account, rejoined the lady, looking at Sudberry— Oh brave ! answered Draper ; then I'd lay my life, every trifle is important ; and if this cork-screw was the gift of the one, it would be dear to the other. It would indeed, said the husband. Aye, aye, replied Mr. Draper ;

“ Trifles light as air,
Are to the *tender*, confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ ! ” —

As he was repeating this, he drew from his waistcoat-pocket a piece of paper, which being opened, unfolded to our view that very little portrait, of precious memory, which the reader will remember has already been distinguished in this history. Take it, Mrs. Sudberry,

said he, presenting the bracelet—take the image of your husband, which I have rescued from the arm of the ravisher; for I do assure you it was in the possession of a lady. You must know, madam, as I passed by the taylor's door just now, when I was obliged to leave you upon business, I dropped in upon the rascal, and was determined to tell him a piece of my mind. It happened that he opened the door himself, and I drew him into a room by his neckcloth, which was by no means so pale as his face. And so, master Skain, said I to him, we are to have the felicity of seeing you *suck'd up* at last. You have set up your carriage to a pleasant purpose; and for the dignity of your profession, I shall make all possible interest that you may be permitted to go by so genteel and untaylorly a conveyance, to the place of execution. For God's sake, what do you mean?

mean? cried the taylor. Mean, fir, said I, that you have defrauded a gentleman of his property, taken in pawns without a licence, obtained security for your money—overcharged your account—(this I added, to make the sound more pompous) most unwarrantably, and, not contented with goods, have taken body into the bargain: the picture, Mr. Skain, the picture!—The teeth of the disastrous taylor chattered most ridiculoufly, and to cut short all trifling, I thus went on, first taking a certain written paper out of my pocket. Lookce, Skain, thy *band*, which was lately laid so heavy on Mr. Sudberry (the insulted stranger, whose cause I espoused), is now turned against thyself: this is your writing—this your name, the sum is nineteen hundred and twenty pounds—the note is made payable to order—it is long past its date, and now in the hands of a resolute and angry

man: pay it on this demand—or guess the consequence.

I was so disgusted, Mr. Sudberry, at the baseness of this shred of shalloon, that I may *now* tell you, the only business I had to leave your good company, was to mortify, disgrace, and punish the scoundrel who had injured you—No bowing and lifting up of hands and eyes, pr'ythee: it was more a selfish than social undertaking, I promise you; for if you have my ideas of happiness, you will think the high-relished transport of bringing a villain to shame, and probing him to the heart, by presenting a Rowland for his Oliver, is payment in full for all its delightful consequences, even though they should render a whole city happy. That this recrimination might be the more glorious, and the more triumphant, I posted away to my friend Spangle's—the gentleman you saw this morning,

morning, Benignus ; and telling him the circumstances, but concealing the names, I engaged him very easily in my scheme, which I could indeed, with the same facility have done, had I proposed setting fire to the metropolis, and beginning the blaze in the bed-chamber of his wife.

C H A P. LXXIX.

As Mr. Draper pronounced the last sentence, Mr. and Mrs. Sudberry again exchanged glances, which the keen eye of our young gentleman perceiving, he thus continued his narrative. Lookee there now, did I not tell you so before — did I not insist upon it, Mr. Sudberry was not an unfortunate man ? This very Spangle has an immense estate, yet

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is without fix pennyworth of understanding—he has a child which he don't care a farthing for, and does not suffer it to sit upon his knee, lest it should soil his clothes ; and hates his wife with all his heart. Which is the happiest family, Benignus ?

Before I had time to answer this question, which Mr. Draper submitted to me, Mrs. Sudberry left her seat, pressed the picture to her bosom, but threw her eyes, full of tender fire, at the original, bestowed a kiss upon every child, and then came again, blushing beauty, to her chair. Lord, Benignus, resumed Draper, what poor solitary things we single fellows are !—But to finish the taylor.

Spangle, I knew, had long ago, at my intercession, lent Mr. Skain the above sum, to make up the purchase-money of an estate, for which the avaricious taylor

was

was then in treaty ; and though I supposed the fellow could pay the note he gave Spangle, yet I imagined it would distress him to take him unprovided, especially as he took Spangle to be an easy man, whom he could manage as he pleased. Spangle was instantly convinced of the infamy of Skain, though I could have made him as strongly convinced of his being a very honest man ; for, as I observed before to you, he is the weakest of all weak creatures, while he thinks himself the wisest. He gave the note to my care and disposal. I left him to his looking-glasses, and drove to our friend Dodge's, in company with whom I went to take out a writ, and ordered the bailiff to stand at the corner of a street, within call, that he might do his duty.

Mr. Dodge was on guard in this post of honour, during my debate with Mr. Skain,

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Skain, who no sooner saw into my drift, than he fell upon his knees in great agony, and begged for the sake of his family, that I would stay a few days, till he could borrow the money on his estates, earnestly vowing he had not a hundred and fifty guineas in the house, and that an improper step would ruin his credit, and *blow up* his character, and *knock up* his trade, and *shut up* his shop for ever. The officer, sir, said I, is at hand.—An officer! exclaimed he, with inconceivable testimonies of horror, while the hair clearly lifted up his cap, which still covered it—an officer!—Here I am, a miserable wretch, who has kept house these seventeen years, in which time I have arrested more than seventy men, and yet never had a writ at my back before. The only parchment I ever handled was my measure: but you won't be so inhuman as to arrest me, Mr. Draper?—

You

You won't send a man of property to jail, before he can turn round—you won't murder and mangle, and massacre my soul and body at once, for the sake of revenge, which is the devil—I'm sure you won't. Where's the picture, I say, fellow? exclaimed I. While I was making this demand, the violent roarings and distracted vociferation of Skain emptied the aerial apartments, and brought in upon me eight ludicrous figures, in their shirts. In a word, madam, the journey-men tailors had all left their board, which was fixed in the garret, and came to see what could possibly occasion such pathetic and piercing exclamations. Each man, in the confusion, brought something characteristic in his hand. One presented to view the half of a waistcoat, another the shoulder and sleeve of a coat—some were armed with implements of offence—this grasped a goose,—this brandished

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brandished a tremendous pair of sheers, and that wielded a needle. I drew my sword, a corking-pin would have answered the same end, and kept them at bay.—The taylor in chief was in an agony, and when he renewed his ravings, they brought down from some private part of the house, a female, of no very lovely, though jolly appearance, who sallying up to me, with her arms akimbo, desired to know what business I had to draw my sword upon her husband.

As I knew Mr. Skain always passed for a batchelor, and as there was something wonderfully unlike a wife in this lady, I was preparing a less gentle reply than she might expect, when Skain prevented me, by rising in a great passion; dispatched his trembling group to their work, and demanded of the lady how, in the first place, she dared to betray him,
by

by leaving her chamber, which she was *articled* to keep; and, in the second, how she had the impudence to call herself his wife?—Sir, said he—this is, I find, a day, a cursed day, in which I am every way to be ruined: my poor character is to be torn to packthreads—I see it is.—But fall when I will, let me wipe off at least one damage in my cloth—let me draw up one rent in my reputation. This woman is neither more nor less than——He was proceeding to open the domestic budget, when the lady, to my utter astonishment, and without speaking another syllable, lifted up a knuckle of Herculean sinew, and applying it to the left temple of the taylor, brought him once more upon the ground. Now, as I contemplated this mighty action, which I apprehended would be the last in which our taylor would be engaged, I contemplated likewise something

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thing else ; for from the arm which properly belonged to this stupendous knuckle, flew, in the heat of the battle, with vast violence of rebound, against my shoulder, that indentical picture, which, while she pursued her advantages, and was actually proceeding—agreeable to the maxims of war—to plunder the dead—having already one hand in the pocket of the vanquished, I caught up, with dexterous eagerness, and having taken sufficient revenge for the present, walked contentedly off, and left the lady to the pious office of finishing her work.

Mr. Dodge, who still maintained his station, I discharged, telling him I had made up the affair without his assistance ; and as all this victorious business was done in little more than an hour—for you are to understand, I pique myself upon dispatch—I think I have a
right

right to shake Mr. Sudberry by the hand (which thus I do most cordially), and kiss all the rest of his family.

C H A P. LXXX.

The manner in which Mr. Draper related this story of innocent recrimination—the dignity of the action, the miraculous recovery of the bracelet, and the pleasant ideas he gave us of the taylor and his lady, put the whole society into so happy a humour, that few things could at that time have increased the general felicity.

For my own part, I was the principal figure of still life in the room; for, being so earnest a listener and observer, and the elegant Mr. Draper leaving nothing for me to say or do, I sat silent and
astonished,

astonished, a mere cypher of curiosity and surprise.

The footman now entered, presenting a card, which requiring an answer, Mr. Draper begged permission to withdraw, for five minutes, to his writing-table, and at the same time saying the card concerned me likewise, took me out with him; and then, as he got to the door, familiarly said, You'll get us a cup of coffee, Mrs. Sudberry: you know I am a person of dispatch, and I shall be with you and your good man again, in the melting of a lump of sugar; so pour away as fast as you will.

By this time, my adoration was so extreme for Draper, that it was almost grown on the other side idolatry; and as I followed him along the passage that led from the dining-room, I could have kissed, with real reverence, the hem of his garment. We stopped at the door of

an

an apartment, at the back part of the house, where, taking me by the hand, and opening the door, he introduced me into a room, which was wainscoted with looking-glasses, and to a lovely young lady, who was entertaining herself at the harp-fichord : she was dressed in the most interesting dishabille that could possibly be conceived—her face was one of those which discompose the soul, and flutters the pulse the moment it is beheld; and her glossy hair came sporting down her right shoulder, in the most voluptuous abundance. She rose nimbly from her seat, as we came in, and began to chide; while Draper gave her, without any prelude or ceremony, a hearty kiss; and with an air of negligent superiority, led her to a chair, and then carelessly drew another, and placed it by her : And how, Priscilla, cried he, tapping her on the cheek—how couldst thou be so impatient

tient a simpleton as to send for me?—Let me see, how was it? Here he took out the card and read:—"Priscilla's compliments to Mr. Draper, and if he is not more agreeably engaged, will be happy to speak with him." Upon my word, Miss Priscilla, a very laconic, well-worded card! and now Mr. Draper is come, what wouldst thou say to him?—For Heaven's sake, Benignus, be seated; my wife, as the taylor says, will excuse my introducing a friend, even though I did not announce his coming by a *card*.—Well, but Priss; tell me at once what you want, because I have but five minutes to spare. Pray who is that *married* lady, Mr. Draper, cried Priscilla, in a fly tone, you are so merry with? Lookee, Priss, said Draper, gravely, no taunts, no sneers: whoever I think proper to introduce into this house, are, while they are in it, people of the first distinction,

in

in my eye: remember I never suffer reflections, nor enter into characters *here*. Nay, answered the lady, I only asked a civil question, as Mr. Thomas told me she seemed a very young woman to have such a parcel of children, and— Oh ho, answered Draper, without the least emotion, Mr. Thomas told you, did he? That's quite a different matter: pray, Benignus, shall I trouble you to touch that bell? Is your instrument in tune, Priss? Perhaps you will oblige my friend with a song, and suppose you indulge us with—a—Oh, Thomas, (here Thomas entered,) your year is up to-morrow, I think?—Yes, sir, said Thomas, turning pale, and Priscilla paler still.—Well then, you will put up your luggage with all convenient expedition, and here—here—are your wages, and a guinea extra for the favour of your moving off to night. On my knees I

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intreat you, my dear Draper, said the lady, with the tears in her eyes, to—to—As I have a soul to perish, sir, answered Thomas, I have done nothing to my knowledge which—Pr'ythee go away, man; I don't accuse you of any thing—but I am in the humour to change, said Mr. Draper, that's all. Nay then, said the lady, and if you come to that, so am I, sir!—Are you? replied Draper, with amazing coolness.—You know I hold it sinful to balk one's reasonable inclinations—so, my dear, pretty Priscilla, accept this foolish piece of paper (he gave her a bank-bill, I know not of what value); accept it as a token; and if you should not again alter your mind, suppose me now taking my last adieu. Mr. Draper again rang the bell, and bowing with great civility, as he went towards the door, went out with as much placidity as he came

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came in. We met another servant at the head of the stairs. Take care, Kit, said Mr. Draper to him, that I am no more *disturbed*; and if Priscilla wants the chair, or any messages, you will obey her commands. Having said this, he gave me a gentle slap on the shoulder, crying, "So much for that, master Brooke," and went smiling, with the air of perfect peace, into the dining-room.

C H A P. LXXXI.

Of this last transaction, I could make neither head nor tail; so resolved for the present to plague myself no more about it; especially as I found the company in the same agreeable disposition in which we left it: but yet the situation of the

parties was something varied, for Mr. and Mrs. Sudberry were both sitting upon the sofa; Sudberry was livelier than ever, and his lady met us with so grateful a smile, that to have come a moment sooner, or later, would have methought been a moment out of time. Strange, however, as it may seem, Mrs. Sudberry had forgot to order the coffee, and when Draper gently reproached her for being so bad a housewife, one of those undescribable blushes painted her cheek, and heightened the natural roses of her complexion, which the poetical Dr. Donne has called *eloquent*.

“Her pure and *eloquent* blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
That one might almost say, her body thought.”

The tea-table was, however, soon furnished, at Mr. Draper's summons; and Mrs. Sudberrys's blush gradually disappeared,

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peared, till it settled only into the bloom, which was always smiling on her cheek.

Mr. Sudberry, who hitherto had said little, on account of his disorder, which speaking generally increased, having, as the tea-equipage was removing, some intention to take his leave, began to return the proper testimonies of respect to his benefactor.

Sir, said he, bowing to Mr. Draper, you have probably saved me from that death in a *prison*, which, though I know it cannot long be *any where* prevented, would in such a situation be doubly terrible. You have, at the same time, rescued from distraction, this tender creature; and, from a more *sudden* poverty, these beautiful babes. Unless you could see my heart, you will not be able to conceive its consciousness. Apologies for having been the means of

making a *man* act like an *angel*, is rather an insult than a compliment. What you did, I am sure you *felt*, and that feeling, while it blesses *us*, rewards you : happy, indeed, are they who are the objects of such benevolence ; *happier* only he, who is master of the sensation which inspired it. In gratitude, (—here he put his hand on his breast,) there is *much* joy ;—in liberality, (he looked respectfully at Mr. Draper,) there is still *more* ; and *we* hold, fir, the second place of felicity, as *receivers* of benefits : that you may hold the first, as the person who *conferred* them,——He paused.

My stars and garters ! cried Mr. Draper, what a pity it is, Sudberry, you and I are strangers ? What a deal of sentiment might you save, (and I see you talk in some pain, and upon my soul, you give me as much pain to hear you talk,) if you did but know that I
am

am so sincere a despiser of all formality, that I never suffer a slip of buckram, even in my coat. I heard that you were insulted, and, for the want of a few scoundrel guineas, unable to redress yourself. Now, insult I am so far from bearing myself, that I cannot endure it should be inflicted on another. If you had a purse in your pocket, a sword at your side, and a cane in your hand; if, sir, Providence had thought proper to accoutre you in this manner, I should have left you to revenge your own cause, and fight your own battles: and had you hesitated to do this, under such advantages, I should have rejoiced to hear, that the purse had been taken from you, the sword run through your body, and the cane laid across your shoulders; because, for *man* to fear *man*, in my idea, is the last error of idolatry, and ten times a greater shame, than bowing the

knee to Baal. But I heard you were without arms, I heard you were sick, married, had children, and was no sharper: because you was a stranger, and because you were destitute, I assisted you. In that assistance I have gratified my darling passions: I have at the same time served one gentleman in distress, and Oh, good God of Heaven, Sudberry, what an idea!—I have punished *three* scoundrels! So, pr'ythee now, don't pursue the cursed subject of acknowledgment. I take it for granted, your little affairs at home are in some disorder; and, therefore, I will not prevent your putting them to rights: your children, too, I see, begin to rub their eyes; and I can conceive, bachelor as I am, the wishes of you all. Without any parade, therefore, get into my coach, or, if you like it better, a hackney coach, and tell me, in a word, what will
make

make matters *thoroughly easy* till this day se'nnight, when I challenge every one of you to a haunch of venison. Lookee, now, what can one do ! Your wife is in tears again — There — there — then — it can be no worse, and so, for God's sake, put this into your pocket, and call me when you have done crying.

C H A P. LXXXII.

Mr. Draper, was hurrying away, when one of the children caught him by the hand, and enchantingly cried, You be good gentemin, and must not leave my dear papa and mamma : they only cry for your goodness, and cry because they be full of glad, not sorry. Oh, my angel, replied the mother, so we do, so we do; your poor papa would have died, if it

had not been for the kindness of that gentleman—Would he? answered the child; then papa must now live to thank him, that's all—I live to thank him, too, said the second. Me vil kneel down thus, and pray God Mighty love him for it, lisped out the youngest, throwing itself at the same time on the carpet, and folding its hands. Murder and assassination! exclaimed Draper, stamping and drawing his handkerchief over his face—there's no standing this. You are resolved to kill me, I think, in my own house.

Come hither, said I, come hither, thou beautiful little tyrant—I was going to relieve Draper from the embraces of the child, when Sudberry himself rose, and walking, as well as his weakness would let him, towards Mr. Draper, he said, Well, fir, we have tortured you sufficiently; 'tis time to give you respite: with your permission, we will now send
for

for a coach. I see perfectly into your character, and will not refuse the pleasures it brings me. Come, Mrs. Sudberry, let us now wish Mr. Draper good night, and leave him, with a promise to partake of his venison. It is only from the scarcity of good men, that makes us awkward when we receive their favours. Mr. Draper happens to perform the purposes for which he was born, and finds, in such performance, the same pleasure you do in kissing your children. 'Tis in both—the inspiration of nature. Farewell then, sir;—indulge your constitution, and I rejoice to find its tendencies so favourable to my present circumstances.

Now, said Draper, you talk to the purpose; and if you have now the wisdom to say no more, all will be as it ought to be. I have done, answered Sudberry. Then art thou, in my esti-

mation, more eloquent than Cicero on the subject, replied Draper.

You are both (thought I) very clever fellows, for aught I see to the contrary; but what sort of a being I must appear to you, I really cannot tell: for here have I been witness to a train of actions, enough to make a devil catch some spark of the divinity; and yet from the first moment to the last, I have not done one farthingworth of good, nor one farthingworth of harm. This Draper carries it all before him, and leaves his friend no opportunity to do a tolerable thing, with any degree of grace. He is the independent substantive, and I the scurvy adjective. No matter—it may be my turn to stand in a better light to-morrow.—At present, I am only in shadow.

I made these reflections, while the coach was sent for; and when it came,

Draper

Draper handed the family into it, with the same politeness he handed them out of the other, kissed his hand to them, as the driver was wheeling from the door, and returned with me into his house.

C H A P. LXXXIII.

Is Priss at home? said Mr. Draper, to a servant, as he went in. No, sir, answered the servant; she ordered Thomas to fetch a hackney coach, directed Susan to pack up her things, and ordered the coachman to carry her into Piccadilly. Very well, replied Draper (not at all discomposed); get the chariot to the door, and bid Crimpa come and tie up my hair. Then turning to me: And now, my dear Benignus, let us go and fight it out with the women; for Mrs. Darlington,

Darlington, notwithstanding our message, will give it us, I promise you; she is the very pink of punctilio, you know. Oh, here comes Crimpa. Crimpa, draw thy comb through my hair in a moment; and while he is doing this excruciating piece of business, suppose we amuse ourselves with examining my friend Spangle's pocket-book: Crimpa is most conveniently stupid, and will not comprehend a syllable about the matter. Here, Benignus, here it is,—open and communicate the precious contents.—I hesitated to open the lock, which Draper perceiving, took it out of my hands, with a sort of contemptuous jerk, and saying, Lock, by your leave, did the business in a moment, and carelessly turning over the leaves, thus prefaced his perusal of them.

I have already told you, Benignus, my notion of modern delicacy; I think we
are

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are wrong both in the theory and practice. I can be as serious and as merry as any man in Europe; but then my mirth is frequently excited by the—Damn this Crimpa, how confoundedly he tortures my head—My mirth, I was going to observe, is often excited, by the very object which occasions seriousness in another; and this, upon my honour, not from affectation of singularity, but from temper, and the mere make of my mind. I always follow every agreeable feeling, and am directed by one uniform principle of gratification. The malicious passions shake a man all to pieces, set his pulse a fluttering, and every way render him disagreeable to himself. The gentle and pacific passions, on the contrary, diffuse such a fine soothing set of sensations over both soul and body, that while one can any way indulge them, at whatever expence, they afford

afford an elysium so infinitely pleasing, that I would purchase them, though I should buy gratification ever so extravagantly. Thus I am the most selfish fellow in the kingdom; and curse me, if I believe such characters have the least merit in any of their actions. Your sly hypocritical dogs sink all these kind of things upon you, as pure efforts of benevolence; but I, who hate strutting it in the plume of another, assure you 'tis constitution, and downright love of pleasure; nay, sometimes 'tis the mere impromptu of the moment.—We are sometimes in a disposition to be delighted with opening our purse, and sometimes with drawing it avariciously together. One object attacks us at the fortunate crisis, and we give him every thing he wants. Another shall, perhaps, meet us at the corner of the next street, equally indigent, and yet so far from giving him that

that which he wants, we reproach him for having the impudence to tender his petition. Pr'ythee go along, fellow, and don't plague me—I have nothing for thee. Such our language to the one.—Yes, poor creature—take my pittance; let it alleviate the necessities which I perceive press heavily upon thee—Thou art welcome to my superfluity, and much, very much good may it do thee! Such our sentiments to the other. Whence these distinctions—whence these partialities? Why, they originate from nature: we are miserable as misers, or bountiful as angels, just as we are in the humour; for man is the most whimsical of all creatures. Now, I'll lay my life, the poor Sudberrys—(this fellow is neat as imported, and does not understand a word of English)—are gone away under the fallacious idea of supposing me the most generous man in the world, when

would all

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all I have done would certainly have been avoided, had *their* convenience alone been consulted. In making them happy, I made myself so : but if I must have procured their felicity by the destruction of my own, 'tis a thousand to one, if some rascally cringing attachment or other, to imperial *self*, did not put in its paltry plea, and prevent me from doing a good thing, merely because it was a good one.

Now, with respect to this pocket book. 'Tis the property of a coxcomb, who has not a dram of feeling in his whole frame : one of my great constitutional pleasures is, to expose and laugh at such a wretch. I am a great man for distinctions. If this pocket-book was yours, or poor Sudberry's, it might possibly contain something rational, and should therefore, for me, be sacred from violation : but being Spangle's, whom I
know,

know, better than he knows himself, and who never kept a secret since he had tongue enough to tell it—being his, my dear Benignus, why, here beginneth the first chapter of folly.—So saying, this unaccountable, agreeable, whimsical mixture of a man, began to read the curious register of the month, written by the polite pencil of Thomas Willimot Spangle, Esq.

C H A P. LXXXIV.

But before I insert, or transcribe any passages from this *choice collection*, I must warn the reader (if peradventure he should happen to live in the country, or never has met the like passages before, which in that case is perfectly probable), I must warn him not for that reason to
 shut

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shut the book in a passion, or spleenishly tear out the leaf, on a presumption that the sentiments are unfaithfully transcribed; because I can assure him (on the veracity of an historian, under my very serious circumstances), that what is set down in this chapter, is an honest copy from the wonderful original.

Mr. Draper neglected the cards and letters on each side the pocket book, and took notice only of those pleasant articles which were marked, by way of memorandum, on the vellum, or, more properly speaking, the *ass's* leaves, which lay in the middle of the book. Each page contained the story of a day; so that the whole book formed a complete history, or connected chain of events.

M O N D A Y.

Am to drive out Fanny in my new
phaeton,

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phaeton, at twelve in the morning. To pick my teeth at Modemaid's, in Tavistock-street, at three—dine at the Devil, at six—ruin Fairfame, the curate's daughter (to whom I have promised a living), at eight—trifle away a ten-pound note with Toyman, at ten—sup with Sanby—and sleep alone.

MEMORANDUM.

Mrs. Spangle coughs consumptively—My off horse seems touched in the wind—he wheezed as he trotted up constitution-hill—Boxit shall teach me to hold forth in *the House*. Bellow makes a great progress: is to make a speech the next motion. N. B. Must turn off Mira—ruined last Tuesday: a fine animal. Have a good mind to have my roan mare shod with silver.

TUES.

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T U E S D A Y.

Curate's daughter cried all night---
hate whining---turn her over to Sanby
for breaking---No undoing Dickens---
have been fix times after her at chapel.
Must bribe Strawby---must get Blaze to
bastinado Brazen---the villain called me
curd-cheeks, at Ranelagh---must gild
his cudgel with five guineas.

M E M O R A N D U M.

Lady Lydia leers at me. They say
she's modest---must, therefore, make her
one of us. Am well with her husband---
wants *my* Fan---exchange is no robbery
---caught Fan. without a tucker---detesta-
ble indecency! Must present her to my
friend. N. B. Wife gets yellowish---
Jealousy shakes hands with consumption.
Dropsey

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Dropsey destroy the elegance of my
angle, if I interrupt the attachment!--
Wit in that last observation---Am going
to be a patron---Dactyl dedicates Greek
verses to me---Perish the whole Gre-
cian alphabet! But as 'twill be supposed
I understand it, shall send twenty pieces
to the fellow. Chapel, Sunday; shift
my patch nearer the left cheek-bone.
Eight hairs fell from my eye-brow, on
my paper, as I was writing an invitation
to Mrs. Glaze. Mean to undo her.
Surely 'twas a judgment. Orthodox a
curled preacher---

Here Draper, after a moment's pause,
tossed the book into the middle of the
room, and exclaimed as he rose from
under the hand of his valet:--Aye, it's
all alike I see. Infamous rascal! he has
not ingenuity enough to support the
character of which he is ambitious. The
narra-

narrative of his day, is the narrative of his life.

Pray, said I, Mr. Draper, is all this constitution—did nature ever form such a reptile as Spangle? Art and nature, in conjunction, answered Draper, settling his stock at the glass, have made a million such, and I am glad I have shewn you the inside of the fellow's brains, that you may pity and despise them.

Curious were the particulars which flew from the pocket-book, about the room;—locks of hair, papers of paint, letters, scissars, and tooth-picks, scattered in confusion. Crimpa took them up, and Mr. Draper put them loose in his pocket, as he was going to the chariot, solemnly declaring, that he would first read them to Spangle's wife, before Spangle himself, and then stand over the rascal, while he directed them in a parcel to the poor devoted Diana Dickens, which

which it seems was the name of the young lady whom he tormented at the chapel:—for, says he, tho' I am no enemy to gallantry, I am to brutality; and such a fellow should never rise to a greater dignity of amour, than an affair with a cinder-wench.

We mounted the carriage, and Draper sat biting his nails, and angrily twisting the glass tassels, as if he was the most rigid reformer of the age, every now and then vehemently repeating—*nation—I love gallantry, but despise brutality.*

To *me*, the world already wore a new face, and contained scenes and characters, which a few weeks before I was utterly unconscious of. Nor let the reader, in this place, laugh at the ignorance of my youth: for thousands are there, at this minute, in the country, who, arrived to their threescore and tenth year, are per-

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fectly unacquainted that so much villainy exists in human nature, as I have delineated in less than threescore pages. Nay, such is still the honest simplicity of those at a distance from the metropolis, that if, at my return to my village, I should tell them, of an elegant looking lady dead drunk in the streets ; of a fop who lays the plan of a young woman's destruction in a church ; of a taylor who keeps a mistress, a chariot, and a black footman, with a silver shoulder-knot ; of a parcel of fellows who lie watching for the body of a sick man, with a wife and three children, like so many dogs at a door ; and of a person who is such a miscellany of vice and virtue, defect and excellence, as Mr. Draper :---If, I say, I were to tell these things---or if haply they are ever perused in print, by people who have never mixed among the polished errors of a large city---will they
not

not set me down as an ill-natured, discontented fellow, who have drawn a very unfair, as well as a very ugly picture of life? Such an accusation would redound so much to the honour of the accusers, that I cannot find it in my heart to upbraid them. To suppose it *impossible* for any of the species to be so destitute of humanity, as I have been, and shall still be, obliged here and there to represent them, is a supposition which argues some innocence in the supposer; and whenever the reader thinks I indulge in the gloom of imagination, I most heartily wish he may never have the mortification to experience, that I have only displayed to his eye the real portrait of human manners.

C H A P. LXXXV.

Fine truants, indeed ! said Alicia, as soon as we entered the parlour. Well, gentlemen, cries Mrs. Darlington, you have staid out methinks. I have just brought Benignus to the door, ladies, answered Mr. Draper, that you might not fear I had quite run away with him : it has been a day of adventure, and now, though I love dearly to hear you make enquiries about the who, and the what, and the where, and the when, the wherefore, and the why ; yet I am obliged instantly to deprive myself of this felicity, by an engagement which must this instant be fulfilled : so I must leave Benignus to tell the story,—you question, and he answer, and rob myself of one of the sweetest entertainments in the world. You are such a rattle, replied the young lady.

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lady. Adieu, Alicia;—Mrs. Darlington, your most obedient, answered Draper, and was rolling off again in his chariot in a minute.

I found the following billet had been sent to me, in my absence, from my agent.

SIR,

I have prepared papers relative to your monies in the funds, with accumulated interests thereupon, ready for inspection, together with all other matters of trust, committed to me by your late guardian. I was extremely sorry to hear of the decease of that gentleman, and shall be extremely glad to wait upon you in Chancery-Lane the first opportunity. Meantime am,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

ARCHIBALD PARSONS.

If haply any person of business should bestow half an hour *per week* to peruse those books, it will not, in their opinion, redound much to my credit, or inspire them with any respectable ideas of my understanding, that I continued so long in town, without making the least enquiry into my affairs, not so much, or rather so little, as even to call or send more than a single card to the attorney, to whose care were entrusted, not only the papers of my family, but through whose hands my guardian had been used to receive letters from time to time, on the very interesting subjects of rise and fall, sell out, and buy in, cent. per cent. with all that never ending et cetera of prudential and pecuniary policies, which so delightfully agitate men of property. To all such, be it known, that I candidly take shame to myself. Much of this care and circumspection depends on education.

cation. The college and the counter so oppositely affect the imagination, that a few years residence within the cloysters of the one, or behind the drawers of the other, give not only contrasted modes of thinking, but make two people (thus differently employed) as utterly unlike, as if one was born to the customs of France, and the other to those of Turkey. And here I beg leave to add, on this head, the illustration of a little story, taken faithfully from the excellent volume of life.

Thomas and John were brothers, and bred up together to the age of six, in the same house, discovering, till about that time, pretty nearly the same dispositions: but the father, soon after, designing one for the church, and one for the counting-house, Thomas was entered a member at one of the universities, and John was situated with a trader in the

city. They were both industrious lads, and made a very promising progress. At the end of about seven years, and not before, (such was their application,) they met, on a visit to their father, who resided in the country; and in this visit they soon evinced the wonderful force of practice, and habit, on the human constitution. The mason who is said to have carried a brick in his pocket, as a signal of his trade, was not a more certain testimony, than those ensigns of office, which our young gentlemen held out to every acquaintance. Their very gait and discourse was become *professional*. Thomas, who had been used to saunter through the venerable walks of his college, or slumber beneath a spreading oak, with a book by his side, had acquired from thence an indolent method of walking, and yet, was as starch, solemn, and perpendicular, as if he had
been

been long treading in the seemly steps of one of the faithful ; while John, on the contrary, in spite of a name, which gives, methinks, the dullest idea of any Christian appellation in our language, had as dispatchful a pair of heels, hands, and eyes, as if he had been serving his time amongst the expresses, or was runner to a banker. Their dress was likewise *ex officio* : Thomas was generally habited in a suit of raven grey, with stockings corresponding, and buckles (though silver) of so modest, and unpretending a pattern, that they utterly discarded all the vagaries of the mode ; yet were they like every other part of him, prig, prim, prue, and parsonly : much against its natural inclination, his hair was tortured into one large semicircular curl, besprent with a little powder, rather in patches than regularly, and formed a methodical arch, from the top of one shoulder to the

G. 5.

other ::

other : his stock was girded stiff in its buckle ; and his coat, though it had never been much tormented by the brush, was by no means out of form ; for Thomas, indeed, had so erect a back, that it would not be easy for his apparel to fit in wrinkles.

Now John, who resided with an eminent merchant (and had always been accustomed to visit the 'Change precisely at one o'clock, prided himself not a little upon a *desbabilite* in dress, the rather he used to say, as it distinguished him from the mere mechanical put, who had a bob-wig for the morning, and a bag for the evening. He, therefore, rejected a smugness which he considered as below himself, and critically marked the external difference betwixt the mere drudge of trade, and the gentleman of business. To accomplish this latter character, he wore suitable raiment : his coat, or rather

ther frock, had a lining of silk, was cut exactly to the mode, and had a genteel proportion of powder sprinkled between the shoulders, just where the careless club of his hair, loosely tied with a ribbon, depended; his waistcoat was frequently scarlet, or crimson, with a very broad binding of figured lace, the more fashionable, in his opinion, when the nap was gone, and it was about half worn out: his breeches were always of *black* silk, so much the better if the strap of his knee-buckle hung accidentally, as it were a little loose: of *white* silk were his stockings, one of which was generally suffered to wrinkle about the knee, or the instep: his cravat (half dirty also) was of white farset, edged with a narrow lace, and tied in a negligent bunch under his chin: and, to crown the whole, his hat was laced with gold, and worn elegantly oblique. Thomas paid

his compliments of duty to his father with the utmost classical accuracy and deliberation, articulating and marking by emphasis, *every word*. He hoped his esteemed parent enjoyed the beatitude of health, amid the salutiferous gales of the country; observed that the ancients and poets, or vates, (which meant the same thing,) were all loud and eloquent in praise of rural life, as could be evidenced by reference to their respective writings, and then proceeded to quotation; and, lastly, he said he expected to pass a very joyful month in the house and country, where he was born, as it would revive in his mind every idea of juvenility, and make him, as it were, live over again those days, which were devoted to the pastimes of puerility, the garrulity of the stripling, and the simplicity of early existence; when (as Mr. Locke says) he

might

might be assimilated, in other words, compared, or, to stoop still lower in phrase, likened to a sheet of white paper.

This salutation differed wonderfully from the salutation of John, who catching his father carelessly by the hand, and bowing rapidly at the same time, said he was glad to see him wear so well; remarked that the florid cheek was a curiosity on the other side of St. Paul's, but that business was better than a fine complexion; and then archly squinting at Thomas, said, that he perceived study was as sore a spoiler of the skin as Lombard-street: he then saluted his sisters, which Thomas had neglected to do, and sat happily down, without ceremony. Their old acquaintance in the parish scarce knew either, and what is still stranger, they scarce knew each other: those who used to agree in every thing, could now agree in nothing; indeed they

they held scarce a single tenet, maxim, or sentiment, in any sort similar; and before they had been a fortnight together, each began to entertain a thorough contempt for the other's understanding.

Curse that Thomas, would John often say—what a queer piece of clasped calfskin it is! for ever muzzing over a musty book, and yet he drawls like a parish clerk! Bless me, exclaimed frequently Mr. Thomas, what a profane, avaricious, yet extravagant being, is brother John! fond of gaudy exterior ornament, yet a mere sloven, *in mente*, a casket, as I may say, a plated casket, without a jewel; and for ever talking of his commodities, and bales, and centums, ducks struck lame in metropolitan alleys, and the Lord knows what besides. I much wish (having about me, as in duty bound, all fraternal feelings) he may turn out a stationary, laudable, conscientious

scientious character; for indeed I cannot but suspect the lad's *capacity*!

The men of business saw in John, all the shrewdness, acuteness, slyness, cleverness, and all other *nesses* that promised the man of wealth. The men of letters discovered in Thomas, all the sobriety, steadiness, and learning, which denoted an able divine. The friends of John thought slightly of Thomas, while the friends of Thomas thought slightly of John; and they soon thought so very slightly of *one another*, that at the end of the month, which had been chiefly employed in debate (each chusing to support his system), they departed in high disdain; Thomas to the task of contemplation, to Cicero, and Cambridge; and John (wishing Cambridge might be consumed) to gainful mornings, and gay evenings, to the dexterity of trade, and the traffic of Lombard-street.

And

And yet each brother made a respectable character; Tom figured in the pulpit, and John was an Alderman. To this story, written for the satisfaction of my mercantile readers, may be added its moral, viz. That their friend Benignus might be a very good kind of a man; aye, and even possessed no mean share of common sense, (that sense which I knew they weigh against all the genius and scholarship in the world,) although he staid several weeks in London after the death of his guardian, without paying a visit to the only person who could give him any intelligence as to the *security* and true state of the *needful*.

CHAP. LXXXVI.

I had never seen this Mr. Parsons but once in my whole life, and that was in my

my infancy, when he took the advantage of a vacation to pass the recess which that allowed him, till the next term, at my guardian's; who, from long intimacy, had so implicit an opinion of his integrity, that he committed to his charge those matters which respected the twelve thousand pounds at interest. However, in some measure to reconcile my unpardonable remissness, I can assure my readers of trading complexions, that I sat down as soon as I had related the heads of my day's adventures, to Mrs. Darlington and her niece, leaving out the mysterious scene with Draper and Priscilla, to write an answer to, and propose a meeting, of business, with Mr. Parsons the very next day. In the mean time, I was not a little anxious to hear about my friend Benjamin, and his uncle; for strange as it seems, Alicia had not yet mentioned either of them. Mr. Abrahams,

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Abrahams, however, soon after relieved my suspense, by sending a note, containing these truly characteristic words.

Abrahams sends comp^{ts} to — Benignus, Esq.—Received his favour,—is overwhelmed with gratitude for *same*.—This is sent (*per* Benjamin), who (as in duty bound) by *ditto* favour, will make acknowledgments. — Abrahams begs a line from — Benignus, Esq. by *item* bearer.

From my office, seven o'clock,
almost half past, — Square,
Ann. Dom.

Just as I was stepping out to make enquiries, Mr. Benjamin, the *item* bearer, presented this laconic card, and (continuing to mend of his bruises) had so spruced and tightened himself up, that he really looked quite interesting, and the delicate languor which pain and confinement

ment had thrown over his features, only served to render them more soft and pleasing. As I knew this card was totally designed for private perusal, I read it transiently, and putting it into my pocket, told Benjamin I should take an opportunity to observe the contents, and that it required no other answer. I saw that the poor fellow's eyes and heart were full, and that he felt the irksomeness of a situation, in the presence of his ladies, which permitted no explanations. The quicksighted Alicia perceived his embarrassment, and perhaps imputed it to a very different cause from the real one: be that as it will, she reddened and whitened several times, and as the lad went sighing out of the room, she affected to hem and cough violently, and said she believed some filthy fly had got into her throat. Notwithstanding the obstruction of the *fly*, however, there

was

was something in the confusion of Benjamin, at this short interview, whence she derived such agreeable thoughts, that she rose into greater gaiety than I had ever seen her indulge, sprightly as she was; and this was the evening in which she discovered more of her character, and occasioned by that discovery, a more grave incident than might be expected from a subject begun with so much good humour.

Now, I have observed, that it is customary with biographers, to relate revolutions of all sorts, with some little previous ceremony; and as a very great domestic change of affairs depends on the circumstances now going to be related, I shall e'en conform to the method of my predecessors, and communicate this important event in a separate chapter.

C H A P. LXXXVII.

It is an observation of the great Plato, or some other famous philosopher, that if a man of perfect benevolence and virtue should come upon earth, he would be cheated, imprisoned, scourged, and crucified; and, upon the whole, more scurvily treated, than if he was the flyest hypocrite that ever imposed upon poor simplicity. Now, though I am very far from thinking I have any pretensions to the perfect benevolence of which this author speaks; yet, without vanity, I may be allowed to possess sufficient to intitle me to as large a portion of abuse, and ill-treatment, as if I had been one of the best men breathing. In the beginning of this narrative, the reader was told the design of visiting London. Since
my

my arrival there, *bitberto*, it so happened, that I rather observed the *manners* of men, than made any formal researches after Happiness. The reader is, as yet, only presented with the principal adventures of a very *few weeks*; and, as I did not retire from society till the thirty-seventh year of my age, am now relating the transactions which happened so early as in the sixteenth year, and was engaged in the great scene of life all that tedious interval, containing the enterprizes of almost twenty years, he may be alarmed into the dread of never getting to the end of my book. Let him *not* be alarmed; it is not very probable that I shall live long enough to write myself out: nor is it intended to trouble him with a recapitulation of *all* the misfortunes and indignities which brought me here; for that would indeed be an endless labour: the principal passages only will

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will be related, and whoever is in possession of them, whoever is the first traveller after my decease, will find the manuscript parted into so many divisions, that if he be a skilful editor, he will publish to the world only just as much *at a time*, and just such a quantity, upon *the whole*, as he deems most interesting and most instructive: for whoever reads any part thereof, merely as a book of amusement, will by no means promote the great moral end with which a man, now languishing in a forest, undertakes it. Thus much by way of introduction to the future parts of my history, which henceforward will exhibit scenes and circumstances of a far darker colour, and more intricate imposition.

Mrs. Darlington's niece was a great scribbler; and though her passion for Benjamin, and her struggles to subdue that passion, had made her of late take
little

little delight in her customary amusements, yet now that she conceived some flattering hopes from the confusion of that young fellow, that she had kindled a flame in his breast, without having betrayed the fire in her own, (for to some such circumstance as this I impute her present high spirits,) she began again to indulge her favourite pleasures of *penmanship*; and soon after the lad had left the room, told me she was over head and ears in debt, and was now going to pay all off at once, and then asked me if I did not love letter-writing? I told her, in reply, that I loved reading and composition passionately, but that I had as yet few correspondents, and therefore few occasions to write letters. Oh gracious and gemini! (answered this voluble girl,) now that is to me altogether amazing.—Of all things in the world, I love writing, next to that I love talking,
and

and next to that riding round the Parks. Oh, my stars and garters, and blue ribbons! What a rapture there is in sending and receiving long letters! When you go into the country, Benignus, you shall positively send to me every post; you shall indeed. Here she took out her pocket-book; let me see (penciling) the letter B—B. B. B. where are you B— (turning over the leaves) oh, here it is. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and so forth (reading very fast), debtor, creditor, *et cetera*. Where, Benignus, shall I find a place for you? I am afraid there's no vacancy—Stay, stay, Monday—(she now began again) Monday—Miss Flarriet, Miss Scribble, Mrs. Muzzlethought, and Mr. Moral. Post comes in at three. Tuesday: Sir Billy Scrawlblot, Lady Lovequill, Lady Sarah Duntaxit, and Olivia Splitsense. Post at seven in the evening.

Wednesday : Mr. Rigmeroll, Dr. Marphrafe, Parson Prolix, Curate Quick, and Miss Merrythought. Thursday, Friday, Saturday, answers to ditto.—Seventeen letters in arrears ! No, no room I see, at present, cousin : my hands, you see, are quite full ; not a single moment unoccupied, and yet not a packet dispatched since you came to town.

As soon as she thought proper to stop, I expressed my concern that she could not find a corner for me : to which she briskly answered, Nay, Benignus, don't be uneasy ; for if you will pardon my sometimes sending away the post without a letter for you, and will accept of a scrawl just as I can steal time from my old engagements—I say, in that case, I will joyfully enroll you in the catalogue : what think you of this ? May I set you down upon these familiar terms ? By all means, I accept them very thankfully, said I. There then, cries

cries she, (writing,) I have set you down as a now-and-then friend—Lookee, here you are, Benignus, the Occasionalist. But good-bye for half an hour, (continued she, looking at her watch,) the post is come in, and I must go and see what it has brought me; for I expect to be well huffed by every creature that writes to me. My aunt knows I never was half so idle in my life. Well, your servant, I shall be down with you at supper. Adieu, aunt; farewell, Occasionalist.

This conversation was run off as rapidly as the tongue could possibly roll it on the ear; and at the end of it, she tripped out of the room, and flew as expeditiously up stairs, as if she really had the whole business of the nation to settle by eleven o'clock that night.

C H A P. LXXXVIII.

Heaven be praised, said Mrs. Darlington, smiling, that my little chattering magpie of a niece is gone ! Did you ever hear any body, when she is once set in for it, talk so much in your life, Benignus ? She's very agreeable, madam, said I. Oh, she is a noisy thing, cries Mrs. Darlington ; but now she has taken to one of her writing fits again, the house will be a little still, for we shall seldom see her now, but at meals. She's perfectly rivetted to the desk, when once she begins. How much do you think that little slut squanders yearly, cousin, in paper, pens, and sealing-wax, besides the postage of letters ? Why, madam, answered I, as my cousin is a very great writer, and has so ample a circle of correspondents,

pondents, I should suppose she may exhaust, in this innocent way, five or six shillings a week. Speak louder, child, said the old lady, twirling up her ear. I had forgot her deafness, and, to make amends for that forgetfulness, repeated what I had before said, as loud as I reasonably could : but even this effort did not answer, for Mrs. Darlington said, You need not shout, neither, cousin ; I am not absolutely deaf to the noise of a cannon—the medium, my dear, betwixt a bawl and a whisper is the point. Five or six shillings ! five or six and twenty, Benignus ! I stared ! Truth, says she, or I'm not a woman. As I had no reason to dispute this matter, I gave her credit for her one pound five, the certainty of her sex ; and observed, that the sum, to be sure, was not very trifling, but that there was no accounting for *propensities*. Now, it was the great misfor-

tune of this lady to hear so *very* little of what was said in conversation, that she often made sad work with one's expressions, and sometimes, by catching up one word, and losing another, the meaning of the whole sentiment would frequently appear so impertinent and offensive, that there was no bearing it unnoticed : whenever this happened, the good woman, supposing the person speaking taking an unfair advantage of her infirmity, would lose all sort of patience, and, without any regard to persons, fall into the most violent paroxysms of fury, and was never known perfectly to forgive the person whom she imagined so to have insulted her. I had no sooner got to the unlucky word *propensity*, of which she only heard the middle syllable *pence*, upon which I happened to lodge the emphasis, than imagining I disputed her veracity, the colour of confusion and

anger

anger bespread her face, and she began in the following manner: *Pence, fir, pence!* As plain as I could speak, I told you shillings: what do you mean by *pence*? Methinks 'tis too early for you, fir, who are just come into my house, to invade the laws of hospitality, insult my misfortune, and dispute my veracity. But infirmity is always the butt of boys —always laughed at, and always contradicted: yet I heard you, fir, be assured: yes, and I can repeat every thing you said too: you said I must *not take account of a few pence*. I would have you to know, fir, I am not a mercenary woman; I love my niece as well as ever parent loved a daughter: nor did I wish to abridge her amusements; I spoke only for the sake of conversation, in a harmless chit-chat way: but I shall learn to hold my tongue when I am before some persons; I shall take care what I

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say for the future, depend upon it, fir, I shall. *Pence*, indeed! Fie upon it, fie upon it! What, in the very first month to behave rudely to me! I could not have imagined it, cousin, I could not have imagined it!

When Mrs. Darlington had brought her speech to a conclusion, she drew herself up into a heap, waved herself up and down in her chair, in the true see-saw of distress, flung her apron over her face, began to stamp with an angry vehemence, and seemed to mourn heavily that a relation could be so cruel to turn pounds into pence, and play upon her misfortune, because he supposed she was deaf, which she violently declared she was not. I did and said every thing I could to exculpate myself from the charge of either playing upon her misfortune, or disputing her veracity, protesting that she misunderstood me, and
that

that I hoped she would ever find me above the incivilities and cruelties she was hastily led to attribute to me. My apologies were vain; she insisted upon it, that what she *did* hear, was a flat contradiction of what she had asserted, and that she did not doubt what she did *not* hear was downright abuse. Seeing her in this temper, I thought it best to leave her to herself, and accordingly rose to go into another room, till the storm was blown over; but this prudent design made her ten times worse than ever, and, in her idea, so aggravated the offence, that she got up with great disdain, and tossing herself out of the room, said there was no occasion for my withdrawing in the midst of her misery, to convince her that her company was disagreeable; for as I thought proper to be her guest, she knew the laws of politeness, as well as some folks those of good

H 5

manners,

manners, and should rather turn *herself* out of the house than her visitor.

Being left alone, I gave way to the pique which her last words had occasioned, and thinking myself ill used, caught up my hat, and without taking leave of a single creature, or speaking a word to any one, opened the great door myself, and sallied into the square.

And is there not then, said I, (walking along the pavement,) is there not *one* consistent character? Am I never to meet with a single being, regular in its conduct, and established in its principles? Are all mankind thus variable? Shall I never find a person to-morrow, like what I found him to-day. Of all women, at first sight, Mrs. Darlington appeared the best natured and the best bred; Mr. Draper seemed the most foppish and effeminate of men; the female who saluted me in the coach, the most affable

of

of girls; Mr. Skain, the most obsequious of taylors; Mr. Abrahams, the most accomplished of stewards; Alicia, the happiest of nieces; and Spangle, the most courageous of coxcombs; and yet every one of them have changed their characters, and, at a second view, are the very reverse of what they appeared at first: *Fronti nulla fides*, sure enough, as Abrahams says; why, I shall begin to believe by-and-by there is not a consistent character—not a *semper eadem*, upon earth. And not be very wide of the truth, neither, answers a voice from behind, which, on turning round, I observed came from a gentleman walking pretty near me. This induced me to quit reflections for the present, and to enquire of this person which was the way to Dover-street, intending to trespass, for a night or two, (till I could otherwise accommodate myself,) upon my friend

Draper. The gentleman answered with great courtesy, but with extreme quickness of speech, that we were at no great distance from Dover-street, and that, although it was the contrary road from that he was pursuing, yet that he would very readily step back with me through the squares, and set me right. I thanked him for his offer, and turning back (for I had gone utterly out of the way) we walked sociably and nimbly together. You have apartments in Dover-street, I presume, sir, questioned the gentleman? I have a friend resides there, sir, replied I, with whom I am going to pass the night; but being very lately come to London, and but a poor recollector of streets, I am not yet sufficient master of the many intricate turnings of the town. Nor I, neither, I'll assure you, sir, resumed the gentleman, who have been fourteen years a housekeeper in it: the

the labyrinths of London, I can tell you, are not easily found out, and a man may pass his whole life here, and mix in all its bustle, yet in many respects be a stranger still. Just as he said this, a sudden shower began to pelt us pretty smartly. Oddsbobs! cries the gentleman, I don't know how you may like this sort of amusement, but I had much rather be soaking the inside than the outside, and if you should not happen to be in haste, I know of a little snug place hard by, where we might take a friendly sneaker together, and pursue our walk as soon as the shower is over. There was something about the stranger I liked, and agreeing chearfully to his proposal, and observing that my time was my own, he rubbed his hands pleasantly together, and flapping his hat, ran briskly through the rain, till he came to the middle of the street, and entered,
what

what is known by the name of an eating house.

C H A P. LXXXIX.

The gentleman desiring a private room, the waiter shewed us into a little box up one pair of stairs, and with innumerable bends of the body, stood attending our commands. It's too soon to eat, whispered my guide to me; but these houses always expect us to call for something, and, therefore, suppose we order a veal-cutlet, a pork-steak, or a mutton-chop, or any little thing upon earth. Please yourself, sir, replied I, nothing comes amiss to me. Well then, bring us, waiter, a dish of cutlets, a couple of small basons of bouillie, and a salad. Perhaps, though, sir, you love tarts: yes,

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yes, I know you youngsters have a sweet tooth. Harkee, waiter, add a few tarts and jellies, and let us have it immediately. On the table in two minutes, gemmin, cried the waiter, and skipped out of the room like a flash of lightning. When he was gone, if you would chuse any little changes, or additions, say so, cries the caterer. Odds-so, (laying his finger on the bell,) I forgot, this is the most celebrated house in England for sausages—they dress them, sir, to a nicety; aye, aye, I know they will be quite a treat. Up flies the waiter.—The gentleman, my friend, (continues my obliging provider,) has a fancy to taste Mrs. Broyler's sausages—she is celebrated for them, you know, so you'll ———Very sorry, gemmin, interrupts the waiter, can't oblige you, but Mr. Maunge had the last pound of sausages for his supper;—have some of the finest cold venison

venison pasty (which was ordered for a company which did not come) that ever was tasted. Venison pasty, exclaims the gentleman again, rubbing his hands with a most vehement friction—better and better still! we are in luck, young gentleman, hey? Up with the pasty, Timothy, this moment! In the tocs of a pancake, replied the waiter, and clattered down stairs to provide it. Ods-fish, rejoins the gentleman, what heads we have? nothing to drink now!—What's your liquor, fir?—We must have a decent quantum of liquor, because that is what is chiefly depended upon: eat a mouthful, and drink ten, that's the landlord's maxim; and what I am going to tell you will sound odd, but I assure you this little nut-shell of a place affords as good Madeira as ever was laid to lip, and for porter—*Fronti nulla fides*, as you very justly observe: this unpromising but fur-

nishes

nishes the best of every thing, and who would think it, hey? Suppose then, sir, answered I, we have a bottle of that Madeira, and a pot of that porter.— With a toast and a sprinkle of the nutmeg in the latter, hey? asks the gentleman: you are a very sensible lad, and know what's what, I can see that. Upon this he ran to the door, and ordered the liquors to be brought immediately. This was presently done, and the supper (which the gentleman relished surprisingly, observing, that as the hostess was his friend, she would think he was displeased if he sent the things down without tasting) was soon over; for my friend was as brisk at eating, as walking and talking. Indeed, every think he did or said was abrupt and precipitate. He was characterised by a keen eye, small features, smart turn of the countenance, and a little round, under-sized person; dressed

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dressed in a plain suit of light-blue, neither absolutely good, nor absolutely good for nothing. A pert sort of flippancy marked his face, and, were I not afraid of hazarding improper language, I should say, there was loquacity in his looks. He had all the lively sense of Mr. Draper, but without any of his elegance; yet his sentiments were so agreeably self-sufficient, that prattle seldom trespassed so little upon patience. After he had poured in almost all the porter, and three-fourths of the Madeira, (for I declined more than a glass of each,) he became all jig and jollity, was as fanciful in his attitudes and movements, as a Frenchman, sung catches with astonishing humour, and rung the changes of convivial sentiment so facetiously, sometimes playing a tune with his knuckles upon the table, and sometimes shewing off mathematical tricks with the glasses,

that

that I could have listened, and laughed with him till the morning.

C H A P. XC.

The watchman calling eleven o'clock, as he passed by our window, made me look as if I thought it time to be going; which the gentleman perceiving, threw up the sash, and damning the watchman for a talkative scoundrel, bade him not disturb the neighbourhood, but keep his knowledge to himself. Nay, fir, says I, it is not in the power of such a tell-tale to make me put on my gloves, while I am in such company; I feel no inclination to move, I assure you: so far from it, that I am almost ready to apply to you the compliment which Eve paid to her husband:

“ With

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“With thee conversing, I forget all time,
All seasons, and their change.”

Say you so, sir ? answers the gentleman ; then ring for another bottle, for to tell you the truth, I like your company full as well as you love mine, and must draw one more cork to our better acquaintance. The cork was soon drawn, and a bumper drank on both sides, while our hands were as cordially shaken, as if we had been rocked in the same cradle, and were now reviving the intimacies of youth. To *me*, cries my companion, all seasons are equal ; I can with equal facility sleep in the day, and rise in the night, or *vice versa* : I never had the head-ach in my life, nor ever took a dose of phyfic since I became liable to distemper : once or twice a year indeed, I buy a few bottles full of stuff from my apothecary, because he is a worthy man, and I wish to be in
his

his books—but as for swallowing any of it—pardon me in that particular: no, fir, I toſs them for the moſt part into the Thames, and at the end of about three doſes thus demolished, my apothecary (ſuppoſing them to have been taken), the next time he meets me, can ſee they have done their duty, and with a very ſolemn phiz, aſſures me I look fifty pound better ſince I began to take his medicines; while I, charmed with the cheat, perfectly agree with him, and, to carry on the jeſt, hint to him a ſuſpicion that I verily believe he has ſaved my life. If you would live upon any terms with your friends, fir, and they have any thing queer about them, agreeably deceive them, and they are yours for ever. But is that quite ſo honeſt, fir? ſaid I. Pho, anſwers the ſtranger, 'tis that pious fraud ſo univerſally recommended by the learned. One
ill-

ill-timed truth will ruin a friendship of twenty years growth, but a million of pleasant deceptions, will only make a man love you a million times the better : I have tried all ways, and I tell you there is but this one upon earth that will do ; so drink about.

As my friend seemed to be so thoroughly skilled in the arts of life, I was willing to gain something from his experience, and briefly recounting to him the heads of my history, I concluded by asking his opinion of my conduct and pursuit ? With regard to your conduct, says he, frankly, I think it is the conduct of a very young fellow ; and with regard to your pursuit, I think it is the pursuit of every man breathing : but I confess you' are hunting for it in a new way. Ha ! Ha ! Ha ! Droll enough, upon my soul. Well, my boy — Be—Benignus, that I think is your name,

name, and a very proper name too—
 here's to your success, with all my heart;
 here's wishing you may find what you
 are in search of. Off went a fresh
 bumper; and as it was upon a particular
 occasion, away flew the glass over his
 head. I did not quite so well relish his
 laugh, though I made an awkward ef-
 fort to join in it; and then with a glib-
 ness and volubility beyond Draper him-
 self, he continued the conversation.

C H A P. XCI.

And so, my dear Benignus, thou art
 seriously, and *bona fide*, running up and
 down the world after Happiness? *Hic*
labor, hoc opus est! Oh puerility, Oh in-
 experience! Pr'ythee give up the ex-
 pensive pursuit of travelling after such
 matters,

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matters, and learn all that it was ever in the power of human nature to teach you with respect to a knowledge of mankind in two words, Know thyself: for in that knowledge is included and exhausted every variety, and every novelty under the sun. Men waste the flower of youth in turning over books, going from place to place, hearing what other people say, and gaping at what other people do; measuring earth and seas, wasting their fortunes, perplexing their heads, and blinding their eyes, and then sitting themselves impudently down in an elbow chair, exclaim, with all the pomp of ignorance, that they have seen, and that they know the world. Dear-bought, and far-fetched, in good truth. One might accommodate one's self, sir, with six times the intelligence, without stepping over one's own threshold. Turn the eye inwards,
inwards—

inwards—Your health, my good friend ; close argument is of a dry nature—turn, I say, the eye inwards, instead of outwards : instead of looking into the world, look into your own heart, and there you will find the universe epitomized.

How, sir, said I, is it possible I can acquire as much experience from—Pry'thee don't put me out, answered the gentleman : I have read, and stared, opened my eyes, and opened my mouth, and asked advice, and taken my own way, as much as any man. For above a dozen years was I, as the poet says, an idle gazer on the light of heaven ; and I might perhaps have been an idle gazer still, if I had not found out, that it was all vexation of spirit. One book told me one thing, which I saw absolutely contradicted in another ; and the friends whom to day I consulted, were

of quite a different opinion the next morning : so at last, fir, I e'en gave up the hope of wisdom in mere despair, sold off all my books, avoided the company of my friends, and in despite of authors, and all their works, took the liberty, like a free-born Englishman, to think for myself. Are books then useless, in your opinion, fir ? said I, a little eagerly. I have not said, rejoined the stranger, that they are, but a page of one's own heart is more worth, my dear boy, than a folio of dull printed elaborate compositions—of such things as are now daily vomited from the overcharged press. Volumes generally expatiate upon facts, that the genius of old Flaccus would have compressed, and that without crouding the sense, in a single leaf. Now, as to making the grand tour in search of Happiness, I never heard of a more sleeveless errand : why, I tell you
again,

again, aye, and I'll maintain it, all which is done or said in the whole world, is written on the tablet of a single heart. Every thing human has been, at one time or other, transacted within ourselves. Indeed, said I, sir?—Yes, resumed he, and I'll prove it, as soon as I've drank this glass of Madeira. At one moment we act the tyrant, at another the slave; now we are inclined to profusion, then, without rhyme or reason, shift to parsimony. You talk of sudden alterations, and think that Mrs. Darlington, and that Mr. Draper, you mentioned, singular characters. Why, what do you mean by singularity? I know of no such thing. 'Tis a mere expletive; found without sense. I, Alexander Green, like the rest of my fellow harlequins——Your name is Green, sir, said I, is it? Pshaw, answered my friend, poetisshly, was there ever such a

over I 2 damned

damned question?—When a man is digging into the very bowels of fact—(for I *spurn* philosophy) to interrupt him in the utmost pith, with a base interrogatory, about his name!—What does it signify, whether you call a man, Green, Red, White, or Yellow?—Sir, let me finish my remarks, and I will be all colours in the rainbow at your service. I begged my angry friend to proceed; which, after tossing off another brimmer, and shaking me by the hand, in token of perfect forgiveness, he did.

C H A P. XCII.

I, my dear Benignus—by-the-by, what a cursed classical name you have got—Oh fie! (answered I); do you, who have

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have just been upbraiding me for taking notice of names—do you?—Ha! Ha! Ha! that's the very thing, rejoined Green: why I was just going to tell you that man was the most laughable contradiction of all God's animals! I am, as you are, a compound of every thing. *Exempli gratia*: I have played the Proteus fifty times a day. I have risen from my bed in a morning, with so pitiful and rascally a sentiment, that I grudged myself the muffin at my breakfast, and charged my servant (on peril of losing her place) not to butter it on both sides: the tea has scarce had time to strengthen in the pot, when this dirty idea has been turned out of my head, by some sprightlier fit, which, as it brightened the prospect, rendered me more sociable, and then I have been in a humour to bless every body about me. Perhaps, in the next hour,

read

I 3

I meet

I meet in my walk some cross adventure, or pick up in my way some cursed reflection, and so it's all over with me again. Thus, out of sorts, I hurry home to enjoy the great prerogative of a house-keeper; to wit, the pleasure of revenging myself upon my family. In this case, my servants not only know my knock, but the state of the temper when that knock is given. Unhappy his fate who opens the door: woe to the cat, dog, wife, or child, which stands in my way, while I am under this malignant influence: presently, first fatigue gives me up to drowsiness;—I sleep it off, and sometimes, to the great joy of my domestics, awake in the best disposition imaginable. By and by a *tender* sensation seizes me; I weep, as I relieve the woe of the wretched, sympathy melts me into tears, and immediately afterwards the tickling of a feather

ther convulses me with laughter: and thus, in the short compass of twenty-four hours, I experience twenty-four changes in my constitution. Examine yourself, young gentleman, and then, as sure as this bottle is almost at the bottom, you will find the case your own. Were you never at one time prompted to the most petulant animosities, yet at another so peacefully humoured, or else so lazily disposed, that you would put up with the severest injury, rather than be at the trouble or pain of resenting it? Now indolence, now passion, now one whimsy, now another; first freak, then spleen, now one thing, then another; in fine, and to bring my discourse and my liquor (which you see runs clear as amber to the last drop) at once to a conclusion, the prevailing maggot of the minute carries all before it. And now, sir, what think you of taking a farewell

glass, and pledging an innocent draught of something in the spirituous way, to our next meeting: a sup of Nantz is a very fine thing to settle the stomach for the night; I feel myself a little sickish, and so pr'ythee, my dear boy, press your thumb upon the bell.

The discourse, arguments, method, and gestures, of this Mr. Green, were so infinitely out of the common road, that I could not for some time make him any other answer to his last request, than by the silent assent of doing, with dumb surprise, as he bid me. In obedience to the summons (though with much less agility than before), the waiter came winking into the room, with his waistcoat unbuttoned, and his napkin tied round his head. Brisk, cried Mr. Green, bring up a noggin of Nantz; and before you venture to attack the stairs, my good lad, pr'ythee rub thy eyes a little,

for

for the sake of thy nose, for at present thou art really walking in thy sleep: this observation Green accompanied with so awakening a slap on the shoulder of Mr. Brisk, that it provoked the poor fellow to inform us it was past three o'clock, that all the company were gone out of the house, that he had a most violent tooth-ach, and had been obliged to bind up his jaws, and to lull it by a little nap. Aye—aye, poor fellow, cries Green, then bring up two noggins of Nantz, and apply one to thy own tooth, my little Brisk. Brisk held his hand to his cheek, nodded thanks, and descended into the cellar.

C H A P. XCIII.

With a very large portion of remark, shrewdness, novelty, and sheer humour,

there was a mixture of meanness, vulgarity, and low-life, about Mr. Green, that (unapt as I was to develope characters, at that time) I did not set him down as a man of fashion. As all excellence is comparative, and as we can only compare one *known* object with another, I measured this gentleman with Mr. Draper, who, in spite of his queernesses, was still my standard. After the most impartial survey, Green shrunk exceedingly: he wanted not only the prepossessing advantages of Mr. Draper's person, but his ease, his address, his unaffectedness, and his deportment. Yet was Green the archest, drollest, dryest fellow in the universe, and, soon after he had tossed off the Nantz, took affectionately hold of my hand, and spoke as follows:

You are a very young fellow, I see, Benignus. I met you, or rather overtook you, in the street, and accosted you

as

as you was *thinking aloud*. I offered to shew you the way you had lost. I invited you to go with me to a public-house; you did so, and for any thing you could tell to the contrary, I might have carried you to a brothel, stripped you naked, and either turned you adrift, or cut your throat. We are both strangers. What might have been the consequence of your credulity? Nay, don't turn pale, you are fallen into good hands: the only inconvenience you will ever experience from meeting with me, is the necessity you will be under to pay the bill; for to tell you the truth, I am a little out at elbows, partly indeed from shaking them too often. Fortune has lately played me a few of her tricks, and I have a few debts of honour on my hands, which make it convenient for me to be as little fond of distinction as possible. Yet I venture forth in the dusk, and as it is

not yet day-light, I shall get home in safety : so God bless you, my dear boy ! and when you think of Alexander Green, let it put you in mind of the old maxim —Beware of your company.—Farewell, I will send up Brisk to take the bill.

So far from being offended with the venial trick Mr. Green had put upon me, I was truly touched with his situation, and when I considered how much more *fatally* he might have taken advantage of my simplicity, I thought there was a great share of honesty about him. Of this I was presently more convinced ; for upon putting five guineas into his hands, as he was going away, he laid down three of them upon the table, and told me, that though he was a gamester, he was not a sharper, often as those characters were united.—Luck, he said, was just now solely against him, and had driven him (not for the first time, though, says he)

he) to the want of a meal. You have given me, fir, three meals in one ; I will keep two guineas, because I happen to have a wife, and two or three young kids at home, and till I turn up trumps again, it's like to be a losing game with them. Two guineas, therefore, will, as she knows how to play her cards as well as any body, keep the honours in her hand, with regard to butcher and baker, and so forth ;—but I'll touch no more : not that I pretend to any niceties, but as I have drawn you to the verge of the precipice, and made you pay decently for shewing you the danger, I'll be damned before I shove you headlong to the bottom, and so spoil one of the best things I ever did since I was created : and so good night to you.——Saying this, he tied a handkerchief loosely round his neck, and again shaking me by the hand, ran down stairs ; leaving me to pass the remainder of

of the morning where and how I thought proper.

C H A P. XCIV.

And yet, such was the entertainment Mr. Green had given me, that I by no means repented the accident which brought us together, even though it prevented me from getting a bed; for after I had paid the bill, and complimented Mr. Brisk the waiter, he informed me I could not have a lodging there, if I would give the world for it; at the same time telling me, that a chamber-counsell occupied the first floor bed-chamber, that his mistress lay in the two-pair-of-stairs, that a country curate had taken one of the garrets till Saturday, the other was engaged by the quarter to four hackney writers,

writers, who pigged together in the night, and scribbled together all at a desk in the day; and that the eating-room and kitchen were full with the cook, himself, and other servants; adding that he did not think there was space besides sufficient for a cat to tuck herself round till the morning. But, sir, says he, there's a house not a vast way off, where you may rest, which is open at all hours, on purpose for straggling gentlemen; or, I can perhaps get your honour a chair, which will carry you to your lodgings. Thinking it either too late, or too early, to go to Draper's, I consented to the proposal of the sedan, which being called, Mr. Brisk ordered the chairman to embbox me, and convey me with great care to the Hummums. — This Hummums had something to me in the sound I did not like; and the terrible image which Mr. Alexander Green had drawn before me,

me, of strippers and cut-throats, so deterred me, that I tapped at the window, and directed the fellows, at all events, to convey me to Dover-street, and set down at the corner house on the right-hand. When I arrived there, Draper, so far from being in bed, as I expected, was sitting alone in his dining-room, with a book in his hand, and the moment he saw me, sprang up with his usual vivacity, and said he expected me three hours ago, as Mrs. Darlington had sent to his house an account of the quarrel, some polite concessions, and a tender invitation to return. There, my dear Benignus, is the lady's card: civil enough, and as much as you can expect from an old woman:—but hang it—don't go there to live any more; 'tis not the place for a young fellow: here is a monstrous large house—you are a kind of lad that I love, and if you don't dislike me, there is a bed up stairs which

which you will accept of. I was pleased to receive so obliging a card from my cousin, as I by no means wished to break with her, and her message took a heavy load from my heart; for when passion cools, any alienation or estrangement from our friends is a most shocking sensation. By the bye, says Draper, who do you think brought the card? Your old friend Benjamin, and the poor boy was crying in my house ready to burst himself, and begging me upon his knees, to press your return to Cavendish-square.

I felt and understood the tears of honest Benjamin, but did not think proper to explain them. And now, cries Draper, what the deuce has become of you since you left Darlington's in such a huff? You flew off in a tangent of *delicacy*—your dearly beloved *delicacy*, I find! I related to him my adventure at the eating-house, and there were tears in
his

his eyes when I finished—Poor Green! said he—Many a worse character than he might have trepanned you into a more splendid apartment, and had less mercy on your simplicity. Well, Benignus, go to bed and sleep: lie down a child, and rise a man. Not ill pleased with having escaped the Hummums, and found all matters so well at Darlington's, I retired to repose, and did not long wait the embraces of sleep: while Draper (as I had afterwards reason to believe) retired to the embraces of a very different nature; for Priscilla had thought proper to return, and Draper had sufficient attachment to receive her again in his train.

By eight o'clock in the morning, poor Benjamin came of his own accord to Mr. Draper's, and upon hearing I was there, became so transported with joy, that he could not be restrained from running into my chamber, and even
opening

opening my curtains to satisfy his grateful heart. I bring you, sir, said he, the kindest love from both my mistresses and uncle, and all the servants, from one end to the other, hoping you will be so kind as to come home. Benjamin, answered I, step down stairs, my lad, and I will be with you presently. As soon as I was dressed, I wrote a very civil card to my cousins, promising myself frequently the pleasure of waiting on them, and acquainting them with the resolution Draper and I, as two young bachelors, had taken to reside together, &c. then going to Benjamin (whom I found brushing my hat in the face of the only servant of Draper's that was out of bed, and he standing idle with a duster in his hand), Here, Ben, said I, carry this, with my compliments, to your ladies, and pray don't forget me to your uncle : — when you are at leisure too, Mr. Ben,

Benjamin

I will

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I will get you to bring my portmanteau, in a hackney-coach, as I shall spend a little time at Mr. Draper's. And so then, sir, replies Benjamin, with a melancholy voice, we are not to have you I find! I was at some pains to quiet this excellent young fellow, as to my continuance in Dover-street; but at last effected it, by assuring him he would see me at Mrs. Darlington's, agreeable to the promise in my letter, almost every day. This comforted him exceedingly; and just as he was setting off, by some means or other, the lower bottom-hole of my coat caught in a little hook at the bottom of the bannisters (in turning to go up stairs), and tore a piece completely away. Now, said I, my poor suit of black, 'tis all over with thee; constant companions we have been a long time, but thy hour is come at last, and we must part. I am sure, replies
 I Benjamin,

Benjamin, if the coat could speak, fir, it would be sorry to leave so good a master; but your honour has talked about a new suit a long while, and if you are not provided with a taylor, I can recommend you to a neat workman, and one of the tip-top sort. Pr'ythee send him then, said I, Benjamin; for I am so strange a fellow as to let a thing tumble from my back before I go about repairing it; and though I am this day to dine with my agent, have I nothing fit to put on: however, send your friend, and perhaps he may mend this till he can make another. He shall be with you directly, fir, replies Benjamin—he's a-kin to Nancy Dennis, though, between ourselves, rather shy of speaking to her, because he's above the world, as the saying is. How is Nancy, Benjamin? return'd I; I wish your friendship for one another may not soft-

en

en into a tender passion, Benjamin, before you are aware : what think you ? I—I—I'll send the taylor to you immediately, fir, says Benjamin, blushing and stammering as he gently shut to the door. Having an hour or two upon my hands, and not finding myself in the least drowsy, although I had so little rest, I sat myself down to Mr. Draper's desk, and wrote one letter to Mr. Greaves, one to my attorney near my village, and one to poor Mr. Blewitt, to whom I had already sent a message, of the nature of which the reader will be in due time acquainted (as he will, should I have life to introduce them) with a great many other matters of importance : for, probably, there are many persons he meets with in this history, with whom he would like to cultivate a more intimate acquaintance ; and thus far therefore I will venture to assure

him,

him, that most of the characters which have already figured in this narrative, will make their second appearance, when it is proper to bring them on the scene ; and before these papers are concluded, the agreeable surprises of Providence will present him with the fall of the mercenary grocer (who I trust is not forgotten), and the re-flourishing fortunes of the benevolent Blewitt. But this is an anticipation I give into, merely for the quiet of the kind-hearted reader, to whom I would reconcile all that is here inserted for his entertainment : after this promise, therefore, it is expected he will at least reward me with his patience, and permit me to display circumstances, not just as might be wished, nor just agreeable to the laws of romance and comedy, but just as they actually happened in the natural course of things.

C H A P. XCV.

As I was impressing my seal upon the wax of Mr. Blewitt's letter, a servant informed one that the taylor was waiting for me below: upon being ushered into the study, he said, attended my pleasure, by request of Mr. Ben. Abrahams, and should think himself honoured by my commands. You will make me up a suit of genteel half-mourning, said I, and as expeditiously as possible.

Upon this, he took out his instruments of mensuration, and began to make some small objections to certain particulars in the workmanship and taste of my present habiliments; observing, with an acute eye of criticism, while he was notching and nipping the parchment,

ment, that he saw the fellow who cut out my clothes, *would* have disfigured me, if he *could*: So cobbled a job, fir, cries he, I never yet saw. What do you chiefly dislike in the thing, replied I? Oh, fir, answers the taylor, it is very impertinent in me to dislike any thing a gentleman pleases to wear; and moreover, it looks like *disparaging* another man's labour: but as to these clothes, fir, the Skip, begging your pardon, ought to be run through the eyes with his own needle: tho' indeed one would think he had lost his eye-sight long ago; for look, fir, the sleeves are too little, the skirts too short, the flaps too long, the chest too narrow, and the collar too broad: then, fir, what a *skimping* waistcoat is here! neither cut, nor turn, nor slope, nor figure: Oh the wretch! And as to the breeches, why they are mere *bopsacks*. I do not mean to prejudice

you, sir, against the man, because, no doubt, he has done his best; I shall only observe, that I will do mine.

Here he dropt upon one knee, and took the dimensions of my waist and knees. It seems too, that the *former* work was not only badly cut out, but worse put together; for this connoisseur presently found out, that the buttons were not equidistant, the seams were inelegantly finished, the plaits were uneven, and the button-holes were *bog-gled*.

Now, from these analytical premises I drew two positive inferences; first, that I had hitherto employed the worst and wickedest taylor that ever threaded a needle, and that I was now going to employ one of the most honest and ingenious of his trade. *This*, indeed, he soon thought proper to confirm with his own mouth, by assuring me, that I should

should *now* have a suit fit for a Christian; that it should grow to me as *natural* as if I was born with it; that he had the honour to work for some of the first people in the kingdom, and, amongst others, for some of the *blood royal*.

At this awful intelligence he pursed up his mouth, stroaked his chin, and made a pause; appearing perfectly to understand the importance of taking leave at the critical time; to stay a moment beyond which, is often to *outstay* the moment of *ecstasy* and dignity. Having finished therefore his climax, closing it full upon the sacred persons, yea, upon the very backs of the Blood Royal, he made his bow and *exit* in the same judicious instant.

He had scarce shut the door, before I cast my eye upon the lacerated button-hole, which I fully intended he should in some measure repair upon the spot;

yet such a stickler was I, at that moment, for the preservation of dignity, that I determined to visit my friend, with a rent in my garment, rather than lower the man's consequence, by calling him back to the ignominy of threading a needle : and so off walked the taylor, without the least diminution of his character or consciousness.

By this time the well-bred bell of Mr. Draper began to tingle, and I took the liberty of a friend to run up to his chamber, and amuse him with the adventure. I wish, said he, Benignus, you could wave your appointment with that money-telling fellow, your agent, till to-morrow. Do, my dear lad, send an apology to Parsons, say you will meet *him* to-morrow, and dedicate the *present* time to mirth, and to me.

Such was the grace with which this young gentleman always spoke, when he wished

wished to persuade, and by persuasion to gain his purpose ; the smile upon his cheek looked such affability, and his air was so attracting, that, whether he invited to pleasure, or to business, he was sure to conquer. I agreed to attend him, and went down again into the library to scribble an apology to the agent ; for which indiscretion I once more beg pardon of the mercantile reader, who, in spite of all I can say, however, hath assuredly given me up, as a thoughtless young fellow, who would never come to any thing.

The trusty Benjamin now came loaded with my portmanteau, which he had laid over his own shoulder ; so that I was enabled to dress myself with more neatness. Well, Benjamin, said I, how are the ladies, and your uncle ? Ah, sir, answered the good youth, they are but so, so ;—Miss Alicia is very indifferent in-

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deed: the house looks as if it wanted something: methoughts too my young Lady has—but I ask pardon, sir: mayhap I shall say more than becomes me. Speak on, Benjamin, rejoined I; I am your friend.—Sir, replies Ben, you are a *goodlike* young gentleman as a woman shall see; and as miss is a little *melancholish*, I can't help thinking she pines a little bit after *you*, sir: nay, sir, don't be angry, but I, I'm partly, almost sure of it; for——For what, Ben? said I, smiling. For did not you observe, sir, cries Ben, how her colour went and came the other day, when you and she were standing at the parlour-door, and how she blushed up, and was *flushed* because I happened to go by, and see you looking at one another—Well, sir, pray don't be offended, but she's a sweet lady, and I am sure——

Hearing Mr. Draper come down stairs,

I in,

I interrupted Benjamin, by jocosely thanking him for his intelligence, and telling him that, as I saw he was a keen observer, I must mind my looks for the future.

This compliment so perfectly delighted him (such is the omnipotence of flattery, from whose insinuating qualities even simplicity is not guarded), that, with an unaccustomed air of sufficiency, he said, Yes, yes, sir, I guessed in a moment, whereabouts the wind sat; and though I say it, who should *not* say it, I believe I can see as far into a mill-stone, as he that pecks it.

This observation lifted up the lad's head; and, like a man who had just discovered his sagacity, he strutted away with as assured a step, as if he had that moment dropt the commoner, and had a royal title, *in futuro*, to wear a star

upon his coat, and a coronet upon his carriage.

C H A P. XCVI.

I had in my own mind given a week for the putting together my new clothes, but how rejoiced and surprised was I to find a man with a bundle wrapt up in a green cloth at Mr. Draper's door, early enough in the same evening for our meditated excursion: I ran up into my chamber followed by the man, who, as if by instinct, left his shoes (in which, by the bye, he went slipshod) at the bottom of the stairs: and will your honour be kind enough to try them on? demanded the fellow, betraying the broad brogue of his country. My master will
be

be *after* coming here *with* me in a moment. The Irishman spoke partly truth; for the botcher to the blood royal, just as I had stripped, came dropping his chin upon his breast, and sliding a respectful foot along the floor like a well-bred taylor, while the shopman (whose garters were gaping from the knees of his breeches) retreated as became him, step by step, in proportion to the advances of his governor.

Your most obedient, sir, said the taylor in chief, permit me to assist you; helping me at the same time to put on the coat, and saying I need not trouble myself about the breeches, as he was certain they *must* fit. Nay, continued he—I was sure I could do it, if any man in England could. I was positive certain of it: you have such a shape, sir, that a man hath credit in working for you. Here, Skip, lookee here's a fall in the

shoulders! Arrah, master, answered Skip, the *gentleman* is a neat-made *crâture* sure enough. But, here then, Skip, if you talk of make, here's a back!—fir, you are a pattern to put out by. Now I think *dn't*, I wish you would be so kind to flip on the breeches.

I complied with his request, after which he exclaimed in a transport—There then, Skip!—there's a thigh set off! there's wax for you!—why, fir, begging your pardon, you were really disguised before, you were indeed—for I do declare, you are a man of a million: had you indeed, been as crooked as a bottle-screw, I could have brought you into shape, but you don't want any lifts from me. No, that's a sure thing, said Skip. The master then turned me round, smoothed my arms, and fastened the first button of my coat.

Are they not a little tightish, or so, said

said I, fir, over the breast here? Not at all, fir—easy as a glove after an hour's wearing. Please to play your arm, fir, and see that you have room enough—don't be afraid, fir—it passed through many good hands before it came to Skip, who is only the finisher—I'll warrant the work. Upon this, I extended my right-arm pretty forcibly, and lo! the stitches flew from the elbow to the shoulder. I was preparing an observation, when turning about, I saw the undertaker tugging vigorously at the ears of the finisher, who began to howl most characteristically. Sirrah, if you was not in a gentleman's house, I would murder you for this, said the taylor; and then, coming to me—Sir, I ask your pardon, I am grieved at the disappointment, but it is not my fault, I only cut out the work—Here he wiped the sweat from his face with his finger, and then, snapping that

finger against its next neighbour, cried, Sir, I'll run the stitches over again *myself*. He then squatted cross-legged on the floor, saying, he was not, he thanked God, above his business, like some he could mention ; and being supplied by Skip with thimble, thread, needle, and scissars, he soon repaired the damages. There, sir, says he---but I am almost ashamed to see you---I have not had such a thing happen these seven years---Oh Skip, how could you be so damned, confounded careless!---Saying this, he went away puffing and fretting, with Skip at his heels---absolutely refusing payment till the sum was *worth asking for* ; an expression, which at that time, appeared somewhat strange, but of which I have since had many woeful explanations. Indeed, the principles upon which the London tradesmen act, are pretty uniform : they give credit in proportion to the appearance

pearance of the customer ; splendour attracts their obsequiousness, and shabbiness their contempt : yet, is it not so much from pride, as sheer interest. Shabbiness does not even carry prospect of payment along with it ; while splendour has at least the *air* of a fortune, and *seems* able to discharge even the running account of a *taylor*.

Alas, poor Sudberry ! while the smile of good fortune shone upon *thee*, whom so respected, whom so entrusted, by the venal Skain ? But when, in the tenderness of her heart, thy faithful partner deposited in the wretch's hands that precious likeness of all she loved, how (from that single circumstance of thy necessity) how altered was the scene ? The long series of honourable exactness---the delicate intercourse---which for many a fair year thou hadst maintained, was in a moment forgotten ! How differently did the hardened *creditor*
view

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view thy portrait, from thy lovely companion ! With a trembling hand *she* ventured it from her : she gave the copy, as ransom for the original ; yet ere she hazarded it out of her sight, she often kissed---often bathed it with an affectionate tear,---and often pressed it to her bosom :---while the inhuman caitiff, on the other hand, regarded only the surrounding ornaments, tore the dear image from the wife's embraces, and used it as he would have used, for *gain*, the similitude of his Redeemer.

C H A P. XCVII.

There was a looking-glass on my dressing-table, that reflected my person in all the decorations of my new dress : and really the taylor had done me justice

at

at last; for whether I received any additions from a flourished button-hole, or from the sable chain that bound the edges, or whether grey was more becoming to me than a darker colour, I cannot determine, but I certainly looked much more like a man, whom *somebody knew*, and who *knew somebody*, than I did an hour before; and that I might be all of a piece, I indulged the vanity of employing Mr. Draper's valet, to torture my locks (which were rude and redundant) into taste. I adjoined to these advantages, the charms of clean linen, with the benefits of soap and water, and made friends with the footman to make my shoes as black and glossy as my stockings. Thus equipped, I walked— if I remember right, rather with more uprightness than usual—into the parlour. Draper had that moment done dressing (his hair being finished before I
had

had left the taylor to the blood-royal), and, possibly, no man at five and twenty ever displayed a finer figure than he made at this instant: he was all elegance, ease, breeding, and accomplishment, with less vanity, and with more excuses to be vain, than most young people of the age. Upon my word, Benignus, cried he, as soon as he saw me, you are dressed for execution: I was thinking of giving Miss Dickens's poor old mother a call in the morning, and you shall accompany me; for I am determined that Spangle shall not possess so much innocence; and, by the bye, I have already taken care of that, and have received from the old lady a cordial invitation to breakfast. I will attend you, said I, with joy, and am almost ready to kneel down to you, as the guardian-angel of endangered virtue. Very well spoken indeed, replied Draper, tying up
his

his garter, and a very pretty sentence. Ha ! ha ! Guardian-angel indeed ! I save the girl, because I would not have her fall into the hands of a coxcomb, who I believe cannot give her even *carnal* satisfaction, in exchange for her chastity — yet, she will be ever sacred from any designs of mine : I care not how much beauty is thrown into my arms, by that mere jackal Tom Spangle ; because, if I did not receive it, the fellow would leave it, after the first night's lodging, to the bawd, or the stew ; and a ruined woman, shall always find refuge either in my purse, or my bed-chamber, Benignus. But still, ardent as I am, I bring no woman from the shade of honour, to the streets of shame ; whom I raise with one hand, I never destroy with the other ; and may this sword, which I am now taking from this hook, send my soul to eternal anguish, if I would seduce.

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duce the angelic wife of Sudberry, to be in full possession of the Grand Seigneur's seraglio. Not *seduce* her, I say, Benignus ; yet, if she (of her own free will) preferred me to Sudberry, I would rush to her bosom in all the luxury of throbbing expectation, let the consequence be what it might. By the bye, Benignus, you should *do* something for that family ; against their visit we will think of a method : at present, we have an evening upon our hands, and I design to take care it shall not hang heavily upon them.

The chariot was now ordered to the door, and we were driven in it, agreeable to Mr. Draper's directions, to a beautiful villa about two miles and a half from the town ; so that I apprehended he was going to pass the evening with some agreeable family.—The house was pleasantly situated at a proper distance from the public road, amidst the
umbrage

umbrage of trees, the verdure of grass-plats, and the variegation of flowers ;— the air about this time grew extremely serene; and the door was opened to us by a female servant.

There is a strange palpitation seizes the young heart (accompanied by a certain degree of awe) whenever the eye is struck with scenes to which it is unfamiliarised. I trembled to the very foot, as I entered a house, of whose inhabitants I knew nothing ; and the conversation of Mr. Draper, a short time before, did not serve to lessen my confusion. We were desired to repose a moment in a room—My mistress, gentlemen, said the maid, simpering, is walking with *the ladies* in the garden. Very well, Lucy, cried Draper, we'll go to her there : come, Sir James, (speaking to *me* under that title,) let us see if we can find them. The servant now opened
a glass

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a glass door, and we passed into the garden.

It was the middle of May, and the weather, which, upon my coming to town, was remarkably cold, was now as remarkably warm; but at the time of our walking in the garden, the evening breezes brought with them the blessing of coolness. The garden itself was delicious.

"Of thickest covert was th'inwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flow'r,
Iris, all hues, roses, and jessamine,
Rais'd high their florid heads between—
Underfoot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay,
Broider'd the ground."

After we had rambled for some time amidst "a wilderness of sweets," the sound

found of a female voice came softened through the shade, and on standing still to listen, the trills of the tune were suited to alarm the pulses of youth: when the song was finished, we walked forward till we came within view of a bower, where several young ladies, with a matron in the midst, were drinking sherbet. My tremor increased as I came near them, and yet I by no means wished to retire. Draper addressed the matron with great familiarity, and, with as little ceremony, gave every one of her daughters (for such I thought them) a kiss, desiring me afterwards to follow his example; to which the young ladies seemed to express no aversion: and I undertook the point with less confusion than might be expected from my natural bashfulness. Elegance, variety, and fashion, appeared to superintend the features, forms, and dresses, of these young

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young women; and I concluded the mother of such a lovely train, to be at once the richest, happiest, and cleverest of all parents.

C H A P. XCVIII.

We soon entered into sprightly conversation; for the ladies were by no means reserved; and methought they talked a little oddly before strangers, (for such I was certainly,) about the delights of love, and the voluptuousness of bathing at sun-set. Draper too was a little more free than I ever saw him, even with the frolicksome Alicia: he said, to one of the ladies, that a bed of violets was the bed of Paradise—to another, that Eve smelt upon lilies when she conceived; and to a third, that she was sport for

Jove.

Jove. — Presently, we rose to ramble round the garden, (which, however, in one particular was by no means like that of Eden,) and it was not long before the company scattered. I took advantage of this, and entering a little thicket of nut-trees, began (as the reader knows it was usual with me) to whisper forth my meditations. And whether hath thy changeable stars thrown thee *now*, Benignus? Amidst regions of real spring, or visionary verdure? Amongst a circle of *living* beauties, made of mere flesh and blood, or imaginary goddesses? In one word: is it substance, or is it shadow? If shadow, mayst thou slumber under the sweet enchantment for ever! If substance, surely it is not more natural than it is *innocent*, to enjoy it! — What uncommon sensations seize me? — I never felt such feverish, yet not undelightful attacks before — Heigho! how my heart springs!

springs! how my cheek burns!—what
 the deuce is the matter with me?—
 Heigho!—I walked out of the thicket,
 and met one of the ladies gathering some
 flowers which bordered the side of it.
 I assisted her, and pillaged the whole
 bed, to make her nosegay. Don't
 trouble yourself, sir, said she, displaying
 a dimple, and the most regular ranges
 of white teeth I ever saw. We walked
 together, and deviated from the paths
 into some shady mazes—there, as we
 were gliding along, something caught
 her by the shoe-buckle, and in attempt-
 ing briskly to recover herself—she fell
 down. Yet, where was all my good-
 nature? Where even my courtesy to a
 woman? I surely lost it all; for though
 she came with some shew of violence
 (indeed she fell upon a paigle bank),
 I never once endeavoured to take her
 up. Some how or another, her gown
 (which

(which was of the purest white), and her under garments (which were white also), were so discomposed by the tumble, that certainly, if I had retained ever so small a share of friendliness for a fellow-creature in distress, I should have instantly knelt down to smooth them: however, to my shame be it spoken, I again confess—I did it not.

C H A P. XCIX.

When, by her own efforts, she had got upon her legs, I ran to her, with uncommon ardour, and drew her close to my own bosom—the heart was forcibly struck, and passion came rushing upon me (arrayed in the most bewitching temptation) without giving me a moment's warning. She was formed for

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love, and I imprinted the kiss, till it echoed on her lip. Ripe as the rose in richness, in fragrance, and in colour, were the cheeks of this lady; and, as I continued to press them to my own, her head sunk soft upon my shoulder, while her hand dropt languishingly down by her side, and rested upon mine. Vitally inspired by this, the blush deepened, and the zephyr afforded a tender coolness, not inconsistent with the occasion.

C H A P. C.

The lady told me that her name was Lucy, that she was her own mistress, that she was very apt to fall in *love*, and that indeed she lived at present in a very *loving* family; in a minute or two afterwards, she took a fancy to my

my new watch-chain, and upon drawing it from my pocket, and finding she made no objection to the watch itself, I gave her *both*. She then mentioned something about sprig silks, and pointing to a lilac then in her hand, said she should, of all *things*, doat upon a sack exactly of that colour; and in conclusion gave me a gentle slap upon the cheek with a myrtle sprig, wishing at the same time, in plain English, that it was *bed-time*.

This last sentence it was, which induced me to examine her eyes. Very true indeed, sparkled they, my lady tells you the truth; if you can't read so plain a page, then art thou no scholar.

The room into which she conducted me, seemed to have been furnished by Pleasure herself; most voluptuous magnificence appeared on all hands, and every ornament was emblematic of the purpose for

which it was admitted. A large lustre was supported in the center by a naked figure, in the act of lighting the tapers, while the cieling represented the Graces binding the brows of a group of Bacchanals, with garlands of myrtle, intertwisted with roses. On one side stood a crimson canopy, on drawing the curtains of which I discovered a sofa of the blackest satin ; at the top, Venus in a flowing robe of Tyrian purple, was depicted in the attitude of presenting a veil, while Adonis, who stood smiling behind her, seemed to watch an opportunity to steal it away.

The sun was just setting, and threw his farewell beam directly into the room ; so that, as the canopy promised to shade us, we were obliged, in common prudence, to place ourselves under it. About this time, her white hand reposed upon the couch, and she had taken off her glove !

As

As soon as the sun was *gone down*, I rose and felt the force of this truth a second time ; that, if *to be good is sometimes to be wretched, to be vicious is always to be so*, after the madness of the moment. And in this manner was I, for the first time in my life, seduced into the company of a courtesan. I found Draper at the card-table ; and pretending sudden illness, I earnestly requested to go home, with which Mr. Draper complied.

As soon as the chariot-door was shut, I caught Draper by the hand, and exclaimed, O friend, how could you deceive me ? You led me into the fire, and I have burnt myself to death. Pshaw, said Draper, never be so cursedly squeamish ; what has happened, is all for the best : you were a mere *baby* before, and now I suppose you—have made a *man* of yourself.—Not contented

with this, he rallied me most unmercifully. All would not do. I went melancholy into my chamber. I tossed about the bed. There was a stain in the ermine of my hitherto spotless conscience ; reflections upon the *first* violations, while the soul is yet unhardened by habitual crimes, are sharp as the flaming sword of the arch-angel, and all the night I lamented that I had so little virtue, when vice was smiling before me. I attempted to sleep, but there was a thorn upon my pillow, and at the first peep of morning I got up—but I did not execrate the fair form that had betrayed me.

C H A P. CI.

How contradictory and inconsistent is man ! how is he led captive, in the

shackles of the passions, in defiance of his better reason?

It was impossible for any person upon earth to be more sincerely displeased with the transactions of the preceding day, than myself. I tumbled over several volumes in Mr. Draper's library, but I met no sentiment that did not reproach me; and I was thoroughly angry, both with having yielded to the temptation, and with the cruel friend who had led me in the way of it. And yet I could not but reflect upon the fair seducer with a degree of tenderness by no means merited on her side.

She was the very first of the sex that had successfully solicited my passions. It was *she* who called them out, it was *she* who gratified them. Ah, my good reader, let me beseech thee, to guard vigilantly against the *first* allurements of Vice. If once thou permittest her to

embrace thee, (and she will come to thee in the smile of joy, arrayed in the robe of voluptuousness,) then beware; for, after the first trespass, (I again repeat it to thee,) the way to the next is easy, and more difficult to be resisted; till, in the end, thine error shall slide into habit, and all that is infamous shall become familiar to thine eye, and even necessary to the ill-directed wishes of thine heart.

These truths will, indeed, be but too forcibly elucidated in the following pages; and though, to my own disgrace, I have set them down with my pen exactly as they happened, for thine instruction, consider the transcript, I pray thee, as the hand-writing on the wall, and let it be to thee as the warning voice that warneth thee from the paths of destruction.

In the ardour of my revels with this bewitching woman, I had in the most
solemn

solemn manner promised, at her request, to revisit her on the succeeding evening, and I was to bring with me, according to her injunction, some tokens of my regard to her. However, not to insult the reader with the repetition of scenes, that bring blushes in my face, even as I mark them upon paper, I shall in brief inform him, that the most dangerous of all passions were now awakened: Draper, rather fanned than extinguished them—the path to personal excesses was now shewn me: I was in the hey-day of blood, and I *now* sought Happiness, not in benevolence, but in dissipation.

And at this period it was, that the nicer delicacies of my character, and all the delightful simplicities of the country cottager, began to fly off, and to leave me. For more than three months, I was a dupe to this handsome courtesan. She sung, talked, looked, and embraced

me into fascination. Her extravagance, however, was unbounded, and yet I was sufficiently enchanted to attempt its gratification; to attempt it at the risque of fortune, character, and every thing else. I was soon taught the mystery of *keeping*, and, in the fondness of my foolish heart, I took lodgings for this Dulcinea, in the most expensive part of the town. Such, at last, became my infatuation, that I had a pride in seeing her eclipse women of real fashion, in the elegance of her person, and in the richness of her dress; and I even doated upon her enough to go with her openly into the places of public resort.

About this time, however, I received a card from my agent, that a little abated the violence of my career; it was to the following purport:

To

To Benignus.

Sir,

I herewith answer, according to order, your draft for 250 pounds, and shall continue to observe your commands, while I have money in hand. At the same time, beg to remind you, that this present draft makes the sum of two thousand pounds had, per order, since the 13th instant; *exclusive* of the other sums since your arrival in London, for which I have your receipts, severally.

I am, sir, with due respect,

Your most humble servant,

Archibald Parsons.

I now began to perceive that the consequence of *keeping*, was a pretty smart circumstance; and the plain fact was, that I had squandered away upon this artful woman, in a very few weeks, a very

tolerable fortune, without having done a single action that can be recorded to my advantage: so far otherwise, that I neglected my accustomed passion for adventure, I seldom visited my old friends in the square, forgot both Benjamin and Abrahams, and was fairly making large strides from fashion and folly, to destruction.

C H A P. CII.

It so fell out, that we were disappointed of the promised company of the Sudberrys, on the day they had taught us to expect them; nor had either Draper or myself the happiness of seeing that amiable family for a considerable time afterwards. Poor Sudberry's distemper gained upon him too forcibly, either for the love
of

of his wife, or the friendship of Mr. Draper to remove, and more than six months elapsed before he was able to leave his chamber; during which tedious interval, Mrs. Sudberry waited by his side, smoothed his pillow, and anticipated every wish that could possibly be performed by attention and tenderness. Nor would Draper, who insisted upon it this was *his* family, allow *me* to shew them a single civility beyond a message-card, to enquire after the state of its health*.

Sorry am I to say, I was less *anxious* about these matters than formerly. It was the very period of enchantment;

* Let it be sufficient to the kind reader, should he hear no more of this worthy family, to understand, that, when Benignus *did* enjoy its company, he found it restored to its merited tranquillity, not only by the principal's recovering his health, in a greater degree, but also by an unexpected good stroke of fortune in its favour, which placed it in a state of quietude and competency.

and

and I was pinned to the petticoat of a Dalilah, without a wish either to recover my liberty, or to revive my curiosity. Plays, operas, masquerades, and tavern suppers, now took possession of me; and Draper, who was always ready for either the vice or virtue of the moment, kept up the ball, led me by the heart through all the ceremonies of elevated prostitution, and equipped me at all points as a man of gallantry.

It was in one of these polite rambles that I became acquainted with a person through whose means I was again led into the world. I was one evening treading the tedious round of Ranelagh, with my enchantress leaning upon my arm, when Draper, who generally attended me, was accosted by a gentleman who pressed him much to pass the night *rationaly* at a tavern, whither some ten or a dozen honest fellows of the *set*, as he

he termed it, were to give him the meeting at eleven o'clock. Draper, who was always able to sway *me*, and, indeed, carry any thing he undertook, not only obtained my promise to accompany him, but also prevailed upon Lucy (so was my favourite called) to trust me from her arms : for be it known, that she always affected to love me beyond measure, and would frequently pretend strokes of jealousy on purpose to bind me the faster. As soon, then, as I had conveyed Lucy to her lodgings, we called an hackney coach, and drove to the scene of appointment.

Now, my dear Benignus, (said Draper, in our way thither,) you are going to a set of characters utterly new to you. They are all of them men of spirit and talents ; but profess to despise all forms and ceremonies, either in church or state, save such as directly favour their own notions,

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notions, principles, and modes of thinking. I very seldom join them, though I am a member of their society : the reason is chiefly, because, as I told you before, I hate argument, and the conversation to which we are going, though supported with the utmost freedom on all sides, is *wholly* argumentative. It is called the Society of Systems, where every man vigorously supports his own opinion against every other, and offers either debates to defend, or reasons to recommend it.

Notwithstanding my attachments to my mistress, the prospect of my approaching entertainment had sufficient attraction to awaken my curiosity, and as the coach stopped at the door of the tavern, I felt my heart pant eagerly with expectation.

C H A P. CIII.

We were ushered into a very spacious room, wherein (for we were some minutes past our hour) were several gentlemen, to the number of about twelve, sitting in a semi-circle, and *one* mounted above the rest, by two or three steps, whom I discovered to be the person that had given us the invitation, and who was, indeed, the President of the Society.

As the debates were not yet begun, the President, whose name was Blake, descended from his seat, and (as the friend of their brother member, Mr. Draper) introduced me to the company, who were pleased to receive me very graciously. After this he remounted, took his chair, gave the usual signal of preparation

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tion by tingling a bell, and the business of the night began.

Very fortunately for me, the questions then to be agitated, were the very ones I had so long been anxious to know the truth of; namely, Whether Providence had acted partially, or otherwise, in regard to terrestrial dispensations; and *which* system, of all the infinite *variety* of systems, was really most conducive to human wisdom, dignity, and happiness?

Now, then, thought I, now shall I indeed be satisfied; now will the grand secret, that has so long puzzled me, be developed: I am amongst men of meditation, liberty, and experience; and this is assuredly the very night that shall settle my opinions, and establish my hitherto fluctuating ideas upon the solid basis of conviction: my *present* notion however is, that the felicity of life can-

not

not be perfect without a *mistress*. —
 Heigho! — I wish my Lucy could sit by
 my side, and enjoy with me this “feast
 of reason, and this flow of soul.” —
 Heigho! — now for it: now for it.

Scarce had I indulged this soliloquy,
 before a pale, tall, skeleton figure rose
 up, and in a voice at once shrill, pierc-
 ing, and complaining, thus addressed the
 President.

I shall shew you, Mr. President, what
 true Happiness *is*, by telling you what,
 of all other things, it is *not*. Is it a
 question, whether Providence has been
 partial or not? Look at me, I am an
 instance of its partiality. The only poor
 man of the society is now speaking; and
 I will take upon me to prove, that Hap-
 piness is every where, but in the garret
 of an author. When Nature makes a
 poet, gentlemen, she makes a creature
 as little able to stand alone, and bustle it
 through

through the dirty and difficult ways of this world, as if she had given him but one leg; and I will *prove* it. It may be said, indeed, that an author hath the talents of genius, though he hath not the purse of fortune. He hath, you will say, the *poetic* power of building palaces, without either brick, cement, mathematics, or mortar; he can describe with the same facility he adorns; the gardens bloom at his bidding, and the flowers shoot up into beauty, and scatter fragrance, as he *waves a feather*. What of that? Can there be a forrier privilege than *his*, who is able to spread a *visionary* banquet, order servants to attend in their best liveries, and assemble together the politest company, when *He* who feedeth the ravens knoweth, that, in point of substantial eating and drinking, this identical poet, could as soon command the portals of the Treasury to

turn

turn upon their hinges, and open their coffers in obedience to his commands, as he could procure, either by cash or credit, the chicken that is roasting upon the luxurious spit of an illiterate alderman? What a multitude are thrown monthly, weekly, hourly, daily into the world, without the inheritance of a single penny; and yet with a set of solicitous cravings, which demand gratification? You must know, Mr. President, that *I* am one of the many, who have real and sound reasons for thinking there are very unpardonable inequalities in the division of human property. Even as I lay in the cradle I was deserted by fortune; nature gave me a knack at book-making, and I have now for many years earned my bread by the fatigue of my fingers: not a dinner but what I extorted from the standish; not a bed, but I literally *made* it, of geese feathers: in the day I
worked

worked with the quills upon the wing, that I might slumber at night upon the down of the bosom; and yet, after all, in the *first* years of my apprenticeship, I did little more than pluck the bird, for the table of my bookseller. He feasted upon the body, and I starved upon the feathers. Now, will any man present pretend to say, there is not a most *monstrous* disproportion between the different fates of booksellers and their authors? Surely, Mr. President, all the Deities, nether and upper, were asleep; surely they had no eye to the operations of *matter* and *motion*, when these crooked deeds were doing! I will maintain it, sir, that a poet ought to be in every respect as happy, ought to have as good a share of this life's comforts, as a bookseller—Shall a being, who exists by the purchase of a commodity, of the true value of which he is as ignorant as the animalcula at the
verge

verge of his nostrils; shall a fellow, who lives by the sale of another man's brains, fare better, look sleeker, and sleep softer, than the very poets that furnish them with the commodity itself? I say, therefore, and I will support it with my dying breath, authors are not sufficiently considered by Providence; and a poet is the only creature of all creatures created, that is absolutely neglected.—I say, likewise, Mr. President—I say, that—that—I say—sir—

Here the stroke of a hammer from the President, knocked down both the author and his argument, in the same instant: for by the laws of this society, no man (unless his eloquence was particularly attracting) was allowed to speak upon any given subject more than ten minutes; and, from his strange method of utterance, the poet had exhausted his stipend

stipend long before he had half run himself out.

The poet was no sooner seated, than another member was upon his legs, and waving a white handkerchief in his hand with an air of genteel importance, thus began to harangue.

The worthy and learned member who spoke last, Mr. President, hath displayed his ingenuity, at the expence of his veracity. It were easy to prove that the life of a poet is by no means so unhappy as he has coloured it; and that all his local distresses are richly compensated by adequate blessings, and by privileges peculiar to the poetical character. Hath not the poet all the advantages and all pleasures of literary reputation? Hath he not all the delights of fancy? Can he not paint—can he not describe—can he not *create*? Hath he not the huzza of
printed

printed popularity always shouted before him? Do not all the honours belong to him, *jure divino*, that result from the laurel, the whisper, and the busy buzz of celebrity? Doth not the pointed finger pursue him, wheresoever he goes? Is not every lip upon the officious echo, telling us that *there he goes, that's he, that's the famous Mr. Such-a-one*? And do not these, together with a fame handed down by the historians from generation to generation, more than make amends for temporal inconveniences? Mr. President, it is not to be disputed: the life of a poet is not a bad life; nay, sir, I will take upon me to prove, that it is a life, to all intents and purposes, *enviable*, when compared with many others. What think you, sir, of the life of a *patron*? Is there any being amongst all orders created, placed in so horrid a situation as a *patron*? A patron, sir, I have the mis-

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fortune to *know*, is fixed by destiny, as it were, between two tremendous rocks : on *this* side of him glooms a Charybdis ; on *that*, a Scylla. If he *patronizes*, he is for ever pestered with dunces ; if he *refuses* to swallow the flummery of dedication, he is immediately purged with a dose of lampoon. Now, I humbly submit it to your judgment, if it is not a most ungracious business to be for ever upon the harrafs—to have one's door beset and besieged by a parcel of harpies, armed against one's pocket not only with *talons*, but *talents* ? Are we not obliged to keep an extra servant, on purpose to repeat the lye of the day to every man that hath the look of an author about him ? Are we not for ever upon the fret by the ferment of printed contradictions ? What temper can possibly bear the thousand attacks that are made upon our purses, by dunces in every form ? this man

presenting

presenting his poem ; that his play ; *this* plucking you by the sleeve with a description of your country-house, which you see every day in the summer, as the Lord made it ; *that* skulking in a corner, to seize you as you come from a morning's ride, with a rascally list of subscriptions. Is it not pitiable, that a man of property, merely because he *has* property, should be eternally invaded by the tribe of scribblers—and that he should be pelted through all the twelve months in the year, both by pro and con, by question and response, and stand the shot of simpletons and system-mongers, without any thing either for the loss of money or labour, except *waste* paper. Upon these accounts therefore, Mr. President, and many others to which patronage is heir, I do not scruple to pronounce *Happiness* more out of the reach of a patron than any other character upon

the face of the earth : for which reason I conceive that *I* (who have at this moment lying on my window-seats upwards of forty epistles dedicatory, the offerings only of the last winter) am one of the most miserable men of fortune that ever existed.

C H A P. CIV.

A third member began as soon as the second had finished.

I have just heard, Mr. President, some very able arguments in regard to the misery of poets and patrons ; and, indeed, for my own part, I am of opinion, that a patron *is* amongst the most wretched of all God's works : perhaps he has no *equal*, if we except the fate of the man who really has a *passion for reading,*

reading, and an ability as well as an ambition to purchase libraries. To my distress be it spoken, I ever had a curiosity both to look at and into a great variety of volumes, and, for near thirty years of my life, scarce any thing, on any subject, came out, that I had not patience enough to examine it.

The Alps and Pyrenees of literature sunk before me. Folios, quartos, octavos, duodecimos, and so on to single sermons; poems published by *desire of friends*; dedications, *by permission*; two-penny essays, penny sonnets, halfpenny elegies, and farthing epigrams, all, all had their share of my money and my attention. I was, indeed, what might very well be termed, a universal reader; and my experience now tells me, that there is no wretchedness like *his*, who putteth his trust in systems. In the course of my readings, sir, I have found

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the twenty-four letters of the alphabet, twenty thousand times prostituted : they have been perverted to innumerable ill purposes, and, amongst others, to draw the deep veil of midnight over the fair form of truth ; to create an artificial chaos, where Nature, and the God of it, said, *Let there be light* ; to re-produce anarchy in the age, that ought to be the age of order ; to puzzle the palpable, and make the opaque still more obscure ; and all this, under the pretext of opening our eyes, and setting us right. If the patron complains of poets, I loudly execrate system-mongers, sir. Fye upon them ! they have bent ten times treble that understanding which was naturally straight. While I continued in the swathing-clothes, I was in a state of nature, incorrupted. My eyes *really* saw, my hands *really* felt ; and had I been permitted to go on, I should have been intimate

intimate with substance, and rejected shadow: truth would have been my guide, nature my companion, and common-sense my friend. Instead of that, I lost my Happiness with my petticoats, and the very day I distinguished my sex to the public, by assuming the breeches, was the first time I recollect to have seen the form of falsehood. The moment, Mr. President, that I began to see, feel, touch, taste, and smell objects as they actually *were*, I was taught to consider them as they actually were *not*; but according to the lights wherein men (or rather children *like* men) insisted upon it they *should* be. The first nonsense that misled me was the nurse's; and from her I was promoted to the deceptions of a schoolmaster. By the one I was made to do as I was *bid*, at the peril of being given to a bug-bear in a white sheet, who, it 'seems, always eat

up naughty boys at a mouthful ; or else, I was to be put into the burial-hole, or thrown to the beggar-man : the consequence of this was, that I began to tremble at every thing white after it was dark, I fancied a bug-bear in every thing I saw ; I never beheld a new-opened grave, that the flesh did not creep upon my bones ; and a ragged coat, or a long beard, always set me on the tremble, lest the *beggar-man should be come for me* : whereas, sir, I am certain, had it not been for these pernicious documents, I should have considered a white sheet as neither more nor less formidable than any other coloured object, and a tattered garment would rather have interested my sensibility, than awakened my apprehension.

As to the schoolmaster, I was compelled (by virtue of that magic sceptre, which whips in at the tail, the wisdom
which

which is to accomplish the head) to adopt all the absurdities of a pedant; and this prepared me for the still greater absurdity of colleges.

Though I was by this time well fitted for the system of universities, yet I longed exceedingly to carry a halbert; but my parents were too much bigoted to the old method of doing as *others had done*, and so wisely resolved to thwart *natural inclinations*, in favour of *established customs*. Thus, after going through the proper course (as it is *improperly* called), they determined my genius to what—as they usually do—it had the greatest repugnance—even to the CHURCH. To this end, I inserted my name in the college-books, and I studied with an intentness that impaired the sight of my soul, even more than that of my body. Weak, however, as I was, my curiosity was vigorous as ever, till at length, accustomed

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customed to delusion, I forgot the horror with which I viewed her deformity in my childhood, fancied charms in her person, admired the force of her intellect, and adopted her as the friend and guardian of my studies. By this time, Mr. President, I had a passion for systems, and purchased, agreeable to her pointing out to me, a systematical collection of books, amongst which were all the pens, *pro* and *con*, of church history, christianity, deism, and atheism. I was taught to believe, that a complete classical, critical pastor, should look, with a nice eye, at the sound and the rotten, the credulous and the incredulous, the Calvinist and the caviller—the Roman and the Protestant, the Methodist and the Moravian. A very grave person told me, that it behoved me to examine all creeds, all faiths, and all orders of created beings, whether Christian, Jew, Gentile, or Turk :
that

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that it would be working in the way of my profession, if, not contented with those obvious truths that lay upon the surface of the Scriptures, I would peep into the bye-ways, alleys, nooks, and corners of the multitudinous persuasions, tenets, and opinions of men, with a sort of virtuoso vigilance.

Undaunted by the appearance of so gigantic a labour, I began the great work purblind as I was: but, not to trouble you, Mr. President, with the particulars of a long story, I shall acquaint you, that about the time I had spoiled my eyes, and distracted my head with an attention to thirty commentaries in *folio*, upon my Bible in two *pocket* volumes, my vigilance was rewarded by the presentation of an excellent living. I soon retired to an admirable parsonage, where I was told by my physicians, a pleasant pad, the country
air,

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air, regular duty, regular diet, the exercises of my office, and my tythe pigs, would bring me about again.

The Sunday after my commencing pastor, I designed to introduce myself to my new parishioners, in a kind of dedicatory discourse; and, desiring to adapt a suitable text thereto, I fixed upon a verse, by no means inapposite, though somewhat peculiar. Its singularity engaged my curiosity, and my curiosity sent me into my library, to make an enquiry amongst the *annotators*. Thirteen to the dozen of these, did I examine upon the verse, the context, and the whole chapter; and I remember well, I entered the library with the watch in my hand, about four o'clock on the Thursday eve: I read till bed-time that night: I rose with the sun the next day, and, with short intermissions, was upon the search even to his down-setting. It was the business of Satur-

Satur-

Saturday to account for so astonishing a variation in the sense of the same verse in every commentary. I compared one with another, and endeavoured to reconcile so many learned contradictions; but how was I alarmed, Mr. President, when, in the pursuit of systematic and orthodox accuracy, I heard the summons of the sabbath duty steal upon me unprepared. Yes, sir, I swear by my cassock, the sermon-bell was upon the toll when I had not so much as penned a slip of paper upon the subject I had so long contemplated. I hurried on my band and gown, caught at the first sermon that offered itself to my hand, and running to the desk without stopping to put on the surplice, began in a trembling voice to read the service. But now, sir, mark the upshot of that utter confusion into which I was thrown by those most villainous commentators.

Besides

Besides that I had wholly lost the chain of the argument I meant to pursue, the sermon, which, in the precipitation of my soul, I had brought with me, was no other than *that* (of which the third was Latin) preached before my Lord the Bishop, and a learned body, at my induction; and, to complete the matter, I had upon my head, instead of a canonical full-bottom, the very cap of purple velvet, that I usually wore in the laborious hours of delving into the pith of systems.

And yet, Mr. President, notwithstanding the perplexity I was thrown into by the annotators, when I consulted them upon a passage of Scripture, and ran my foolish nose against the stumbling-blocks of those dismally dark explicators——notwithstanding these misfortunes, sir, I am now—what you see me—of responsible corpulence, and of decent bodily dimensions;

dimensions; and had I not already too much trespassed on your indulgence, I would inform you, what *I feel* to be HAPPINESS, and what, being now in possession of, I would not part with, either for the visions of poetry, the pride of patronage, or any thing else upon the globe: I have found out real Felicity, Mr. President, and I will not suffer her to depart again from me.

The whole company were so entertained by this venerable speaker, (who appeared to be stepping into his seventieth year, and yet commanded attention, both by his manner and appearance,) it was the unanimous desire of the society, that the President should dispense with ordinary ceremonies, and allow the gentleman to finish his story, in which he was to discover the road to *real* HAPPINESS.

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END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.